NOVEMBER 1988
ISSUE TWO
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FOR 16-BIT GAMES

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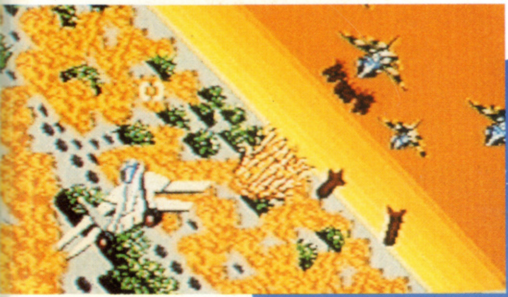

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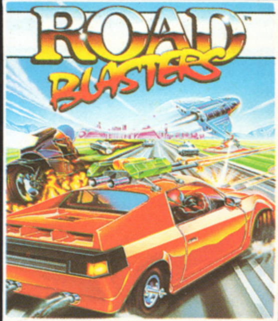
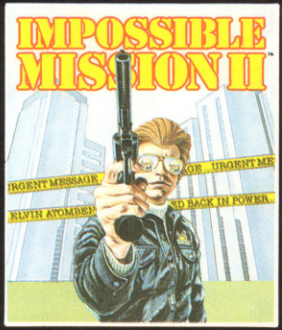

ROAD BLASTERS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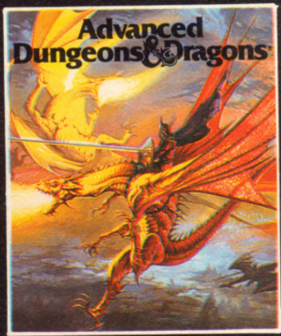

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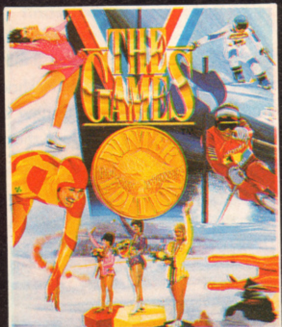
START



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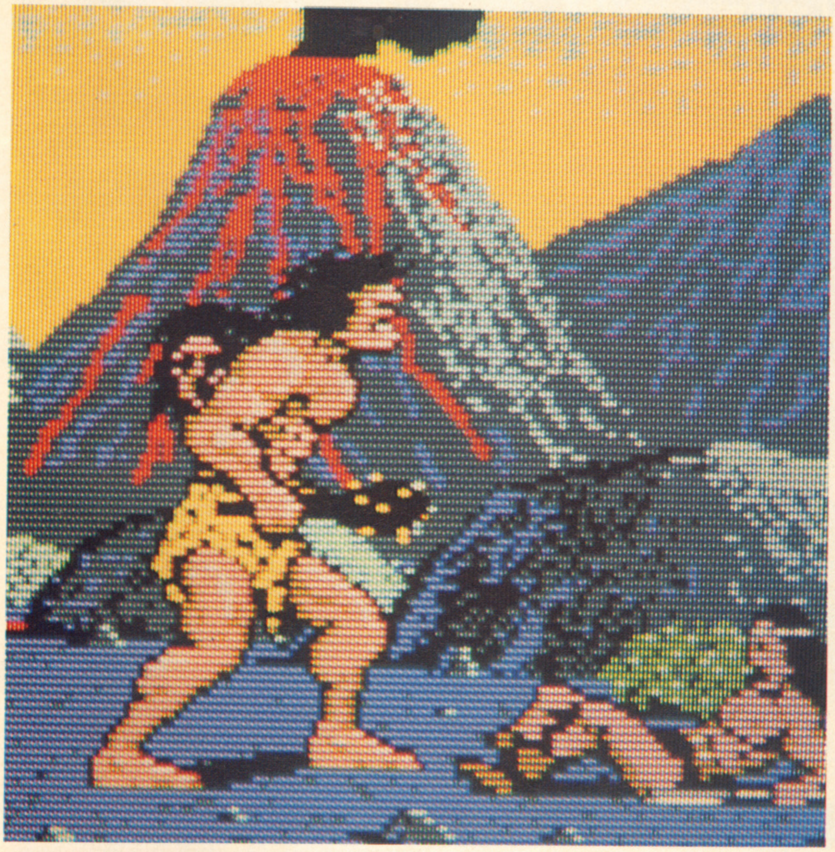

18 BARBARIAN II

Drax is back and badder than before... Palace Software's sequel to their brilliant blood-thirsty beat 'em up of last year is even bloodier and better.

68 BATTLE CHESS

Oh no, not another Chess game... Wait a minute – are those pieces alive? Uh-huh. Did that King really shoot a Bishop with 357 Magnum? He did!... A wonderful new approach to the age-old sport, courtesy of Bards Tale authors Interplay.

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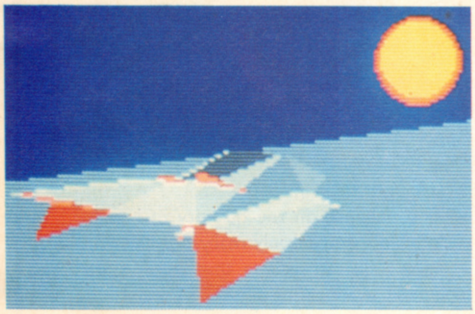
In response to the Players Guide in the first issue there are some more Virus **hints, plus extra help with Rainbird's** Carrier Command, **and a host of other helpful odds and sods.**

53 PLAY GUIDE

Steve Jarratt heads an assorted cast of games players to bring you a complete Players Guide to Rainbird's Starglider II.



94 DEMOS

This month it's ST and Amiga music which catches Gary Whitta's eye (?), in particular an impressive never-ending remix of Pump Up The Volume.

98 ARCADES

Julian Rignall goes up, up and away with Taito's Superman, **finds Irem's** Ninja Spirit **is a cut above the rest, and thrills to the high speed driving spills of** Chase HQ.

102 FEATURE

Getting Interactive... with CDI and in particular DVI. Will they make today's best sellers look like Pong? **Cinemaware seem to think so, and they weren't joking...**

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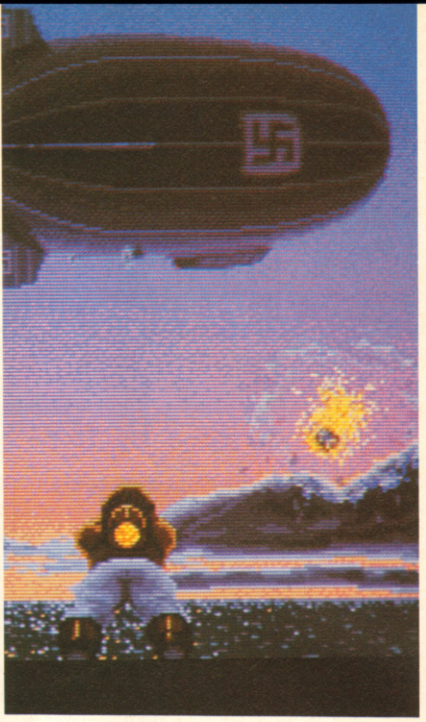
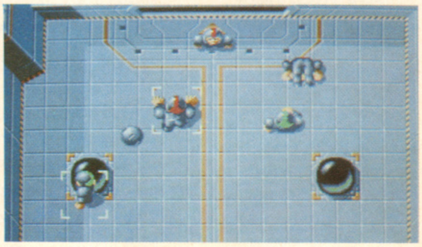


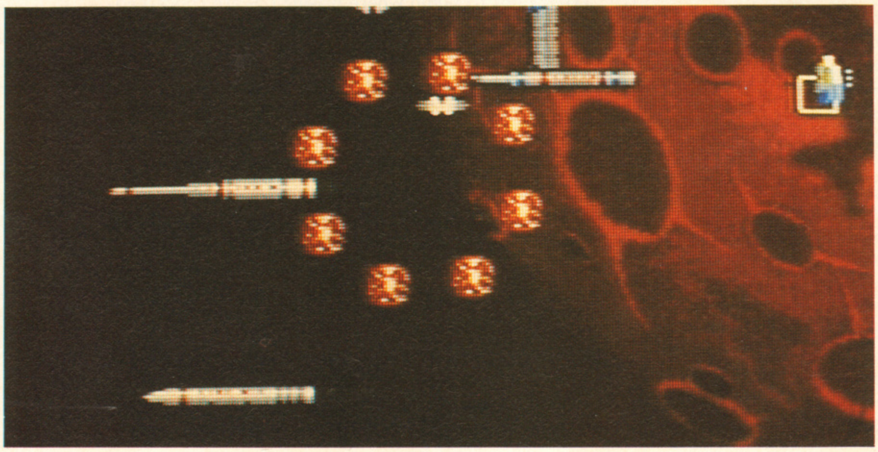
72 ROCKET RANGER

Interactive movie producers Cinemaware have excelled themselves with their latest production – an engrossing piece of binary fiction based on the 1940s Saturday morning cinema serial, King Of The Rocket Men.



34 SPEEDBALL

The Bitmap Brothers' dazzling debut, **Xenon**, caused a stir when it appeared last year from Melbourne House. Their second release, this time for Image Works, is even better – and it's nothing like its forerunner.



90 SDI

The second game of this name to hit the 16-bit machines – only this time around it's a classy Activision conversion from one of Sega's lesser known coin-ops.

WHO's WHO

CHRIS JENKINS
Mr Music is usually found between the pages of sister publication Sinclair User, but he does possess an ST (at times it seems to possess him) and enjoys a good game or two – like Rainbird's Carrier Command**.**

GARY PENN
The editor of this illustrious organ, Mr Penn reckons he know his onions. He likes almost everything and anything, which seems terribly non-committal but that's just the kind of guy he is.

JULIAN RIGNALL
The spiky haired erstwhile ZZAP! editor has his roots burrowing even deeper into C+VG's soil, which is why this will probably be the last time you read his words of wisdom in The One.

PHIL SOUTH
Or Snout as he's known to ...er, people who know him... has worked on an assortment of publications over the years, including Your Sinclair and Your Amiga. He's owned an Amiga for absolutely yonks and reckons he knows more than too much when it comes to games. And who are we to disagree...

GARY WHITTA
The fresh-faced Chingford lad has recently found himself hooked on Image Works' Speedball **in a big way and enjoys nothing more than beating our Ad Manager, Scrivo... at** Speedball **that is. But when he's not dishing out humiliation in large doses he's ever the likely lad, and with a vast knowledge of computer games bursting to get out, our Gaz is sure to please.**

STEVE JARRATT
This erstwhile ZZAP! and CRASH chap also has gallons of games playing and reviewing experience. Steve has recently passed on to Commodore User, but still finds the time to write ST reviews for his favourite computer magazine.

PAUL BOUGHTON
One-time Deputy Editor for Computer + Video Games, young Paul has years of games playing experience under his belt. Mr B likes plenty of action, but certainly isn't adverse to using his noddle where necessary.

Welcome to the second issue of The One.

Just in case you missed the first issue(or you couldn't be bothered to read page six), here's a brief explanation as to what it's all about...

The One is an authoritative monthly guide to 16-bit games and beyond. As an ST or Amiga owner you are at the forefront of new technology where games playing is concerned, and we hope to provide as much relevant information as possible, including tips and chats with the faces behind the games. Reviews invariably occupy two or more pages and follow what we feel is an easily digested format that works like this... Imagine we receive an ST and Amiga version of a game – say, Image Works' **Speedball**. An ST game player reviews the ST version and an Amiga games player reviews the Commodore version. It's the same game in both instances – slightly different execution perhaps, but we're talking game design here. This crossover forms the main chunk of the review, providing sufficient information for both ST and Amiga owners alike. The machine specific comments are used to highlight the game's good and bad points and also any differences. Even if there are no rating available for your machine, at least you have an incredibly in-depth preview to digest.

When The One was being designed we decided that it was important to keep everything simple, no pretentions, no bull, and that includes the ratings. There are five straightforward categories rated with percentages for flexibility. GRAPHICS and SOUND reflect more than just quality of aesthetics, taking into consideration how well, say, animation, music and sound effects are used. PLAYABILITY is to let you know how accessible and enjoyable a game is to play, while the potential lasting value is considered with VALUE. OVERALL provides an instant comparison rating, and is basically what it says: an overall opinion. We take 50% as a very strict average, with anything good falling around the 60% mark, very good 70%, great 80% and brilliant 90% or so upwards.

We try not to skimp where playing tips are concerned either. Each month we will feature a complete players guide to a game that we feel is worthy of such attention. Last month we had a four page pull-out on Virus, and this month it's the turn of Starglider II. Like the reviews, we want to get across the feel of a game by using illustrations and captions. Other, less involved tips are also provided.

The mail has been flooding in thick and fast, all of it extremely complementary about Issue One, and all gratefully received. Rather than fill a page or two with said praise, I thought it best to pick out a few extracts, mainly queries...

Marc Foreman of Alwoodley, Leeds has decided to upgrade to an Amiga "on the impressive strength of your first issue..." and wants to know whether C64 joysticks can be used. Yes they can, Mr F Marc goes on to ask whether we could mention in reviews from which version the screenshots are taken. Well, we won't be machine specific when versions of a game look identical, but we will certainly let you know when there are any major difference.

Mr V Sonvico of Hanwell hopes that we "don't get into any petty discussions about which machine is better – the Atari ST or Commodore Amiga." Rest assured we won't. The advantages and disadvantages are obvious to owners of each machine.

"Will you be featuring ST and Amiga charts," asks Jeremy Tutt of Longthorpe, Peterborough. We shall indeed, as of next month...

A B Metchick of Sheffield found a bug in the Fusion demo on Issue One's cover disk... "When the Assault Crawler is hit by two or more aliens at the same time, the screen goes black and the soundtrack continues to play but you can't... I can't say I've heard of this before – anyone else with a similar problem?

C O'Brien of Warrington in Cheshire wants a full colour magazine, a bigger arcade section, more tips, and would appreciate us being more machine specific where news and screenshots are concerned. Fair enough, C, but believe it or not, colour costs – a lot. The size of the arcade section depends on the quantity of releases during that month, and we can only really print as many tips as we receive. You can assume that unless stated otherwise, games will be appearing on both ST and Amiga.

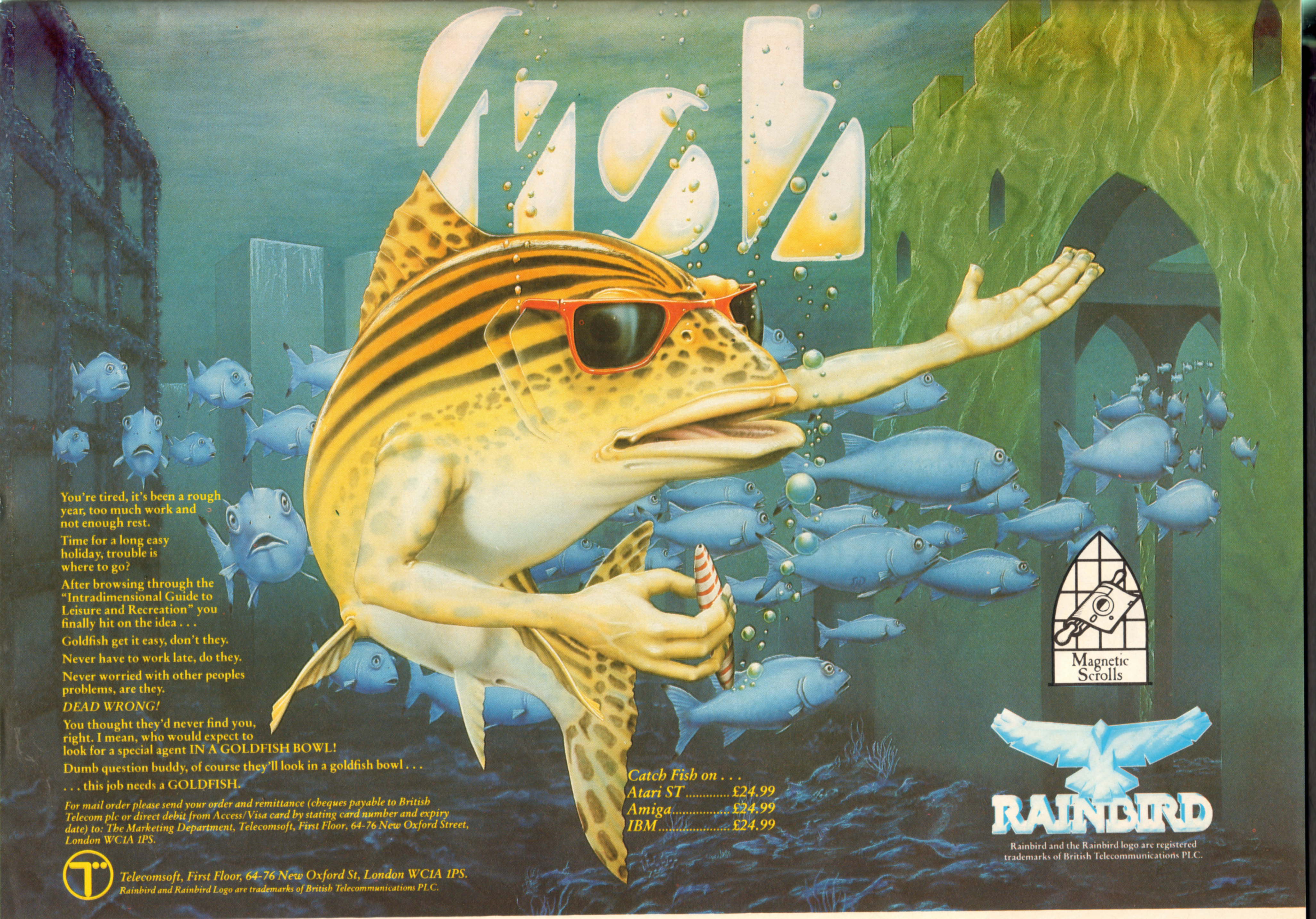
Back to the cover disk... Ian Coffin from Peachaven in East Sussex enjoyed the Nebulus demo immensely, and wants to know whether anyone can topple the tower in less than one minute and 23 seconds. Any offers? N Woollacott of Brackley in Northants on the other hand, is struck and in desperate need of some help.

Kev Buchanan of Derby wrote to say how impressed he was with the first issue, but more so it seems by the fact that he was able to remove the disk without ripping the cover. You're not alone there, Kev...

"Where's the adventure column?" Asks Paul Smith from Bath. I'm afraid there isn't one, is the answer. Well that's a slight fib – adventure games will be treated in much the same way as arcade games, only with a more refined approach and specialist ratings. Check out the review of **Fish** in the next issue, Paul.

And finally, Reuben Wilkinson of Little Hadham in Herefordshire wonders if we will be updating reviews as and when other versions are available. Fear not, Reuben – we most certainly will be providing updates... Just take a look at this issue.

Keep up the response, and remember: It's up to you to help us to help you get the most out of what is essentially your magazine. Enjoy this issue, and see you next month...



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DEAD WRONG!

You thought they'd never find you, right. I mean, who would expect to look for a special agent IN A GOLDFISH BOWL!

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. . . this job needs a GOLDFISH.

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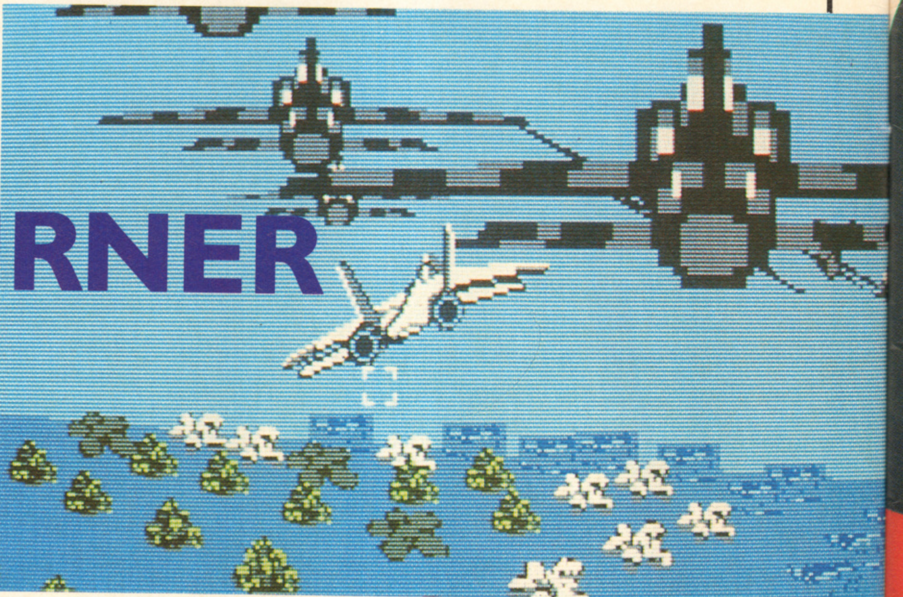
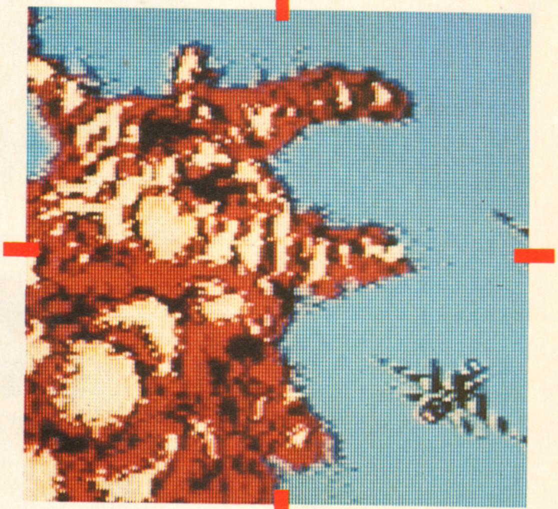
NEWS

AFTERBURNER



Prepare for high speed aerial combat... a squadron of enemy fighters zooms in from behind in the 16-bit conversion of Afterburner. **Hang on to your hats – there's a review next month.**



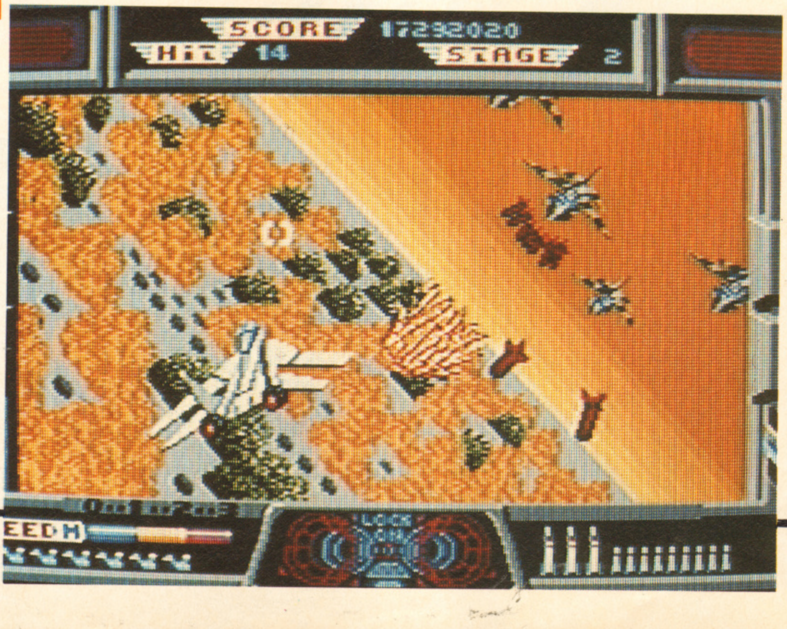
Thank you and good-night! Your fighter bites the dust after losing a furious head to head confrontation on Level Nine. Thanks to some neat programming techniques, Argonaut are confident of capturing the original's playability.

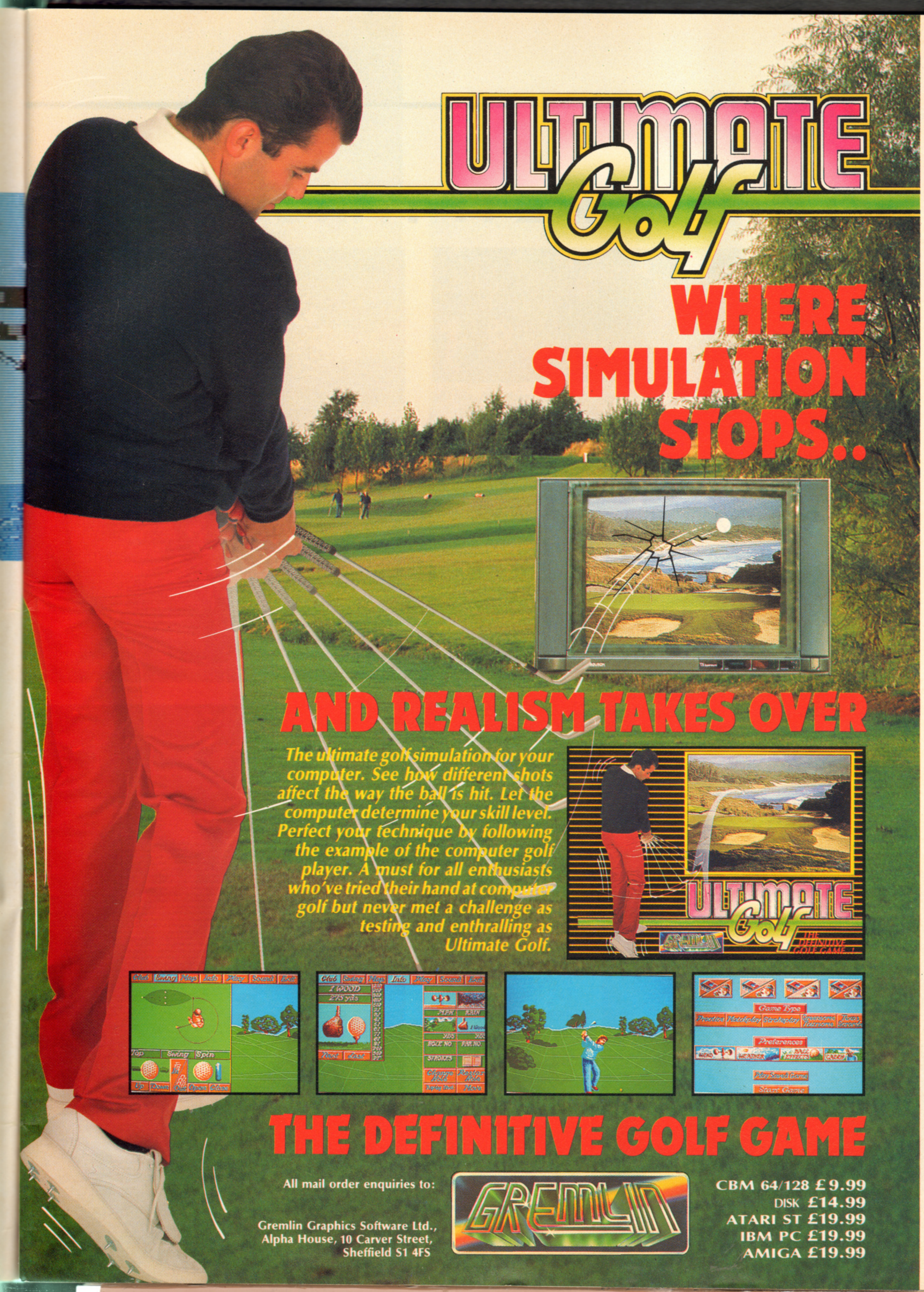
ACTIVISION'S conversion of the smash Sega game **Afterburner**, arguably one of the best-known (and most successful) coin-ops of all time, is nearing completion. Work has been going on for over six months, and now only the inclusion of music and the ironing-out of bugs remains. As mentioned in the last issue, the conversion work is in the very capable hands of Jez San and his Argonaut programming team, who were responsible for the excellent **Starglider** and **Starglider II**.

Afterburner is an aerial shoot 'em up based around the F-14 Tomcat (the planes used in the film Top Gun), boasting some of the most spectacular graphics and sound ever seen in the arcades. **Afterburner's** technical specification is awesome... The arcade machine requires two 16-bit processors to generate the exhilarating sensation of high-speed dogfighting, and the entire game takes up over three Megabytes of memory! Despite this, Jez is confident that the finished ST and Amiga versions will be as close to the arcade original as the machines will allow. Of course there's no way that the conversions will be 100% perfect (even the ST and Amiga have their limits), but from the demos we've seen so far, it looks like it could well turn out to be a more accurate conversion than anybody would have expected. Sega were reputedly so pleased with the conversion when they first saw it that they first saw it that they ordered a conversion to the PC, so that too is now well and truly in the pipeline.

Speed is of the essence in **Afterburner**, and the Argonauts believe that, thanks to the use of some new programming techniques, they can capture the high-speed thrills and spills of the original. All of the coin-op's original features have been included, such as refuelling, the take-off from the aircraft carrier and the missile lock-on system, and only a few more routines need to be added before the whole project is complete and ready for review in our next issue. **Afterburner** will be launched on the ST around Christmas time at £24.99, with Amiga and PC versions to follow in the new year at the same price.

Over six months in the making, Argonaut Software's conversion of Afterburner **for Mediagenic is looking surprisingly good, complete with fast graphics and excellent soundtrack.**

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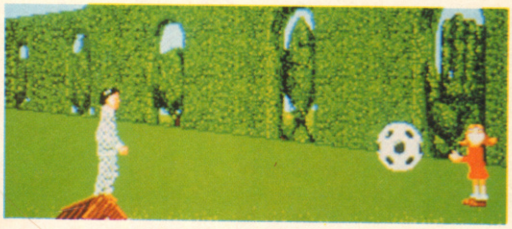
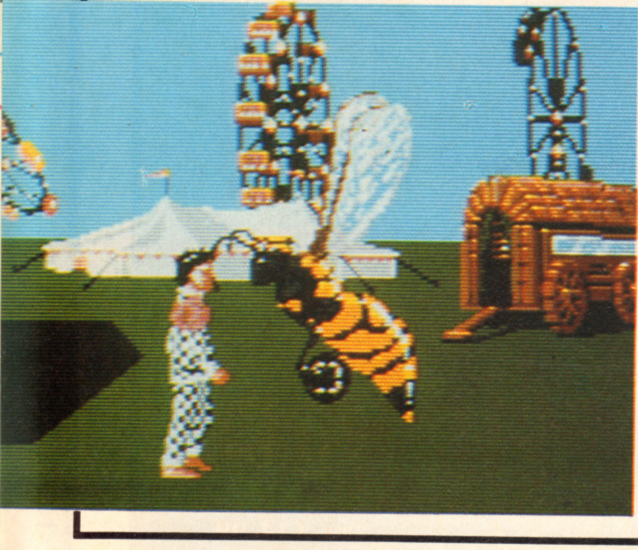
HELP ME MAKE IT THROUGH THE

Not many people know this, but EVERY night you tuck yourself up in bed and drift into the land of slumber, you dream. The reason you don't think you do is that you only remember the really weird ones in the morning. And that's what Rainbird's latest release is all about. **Weird Dreams** is, believe it or not, a nightmare simulation. Developed under the rather long-winded name of **Doctor, I think I'm having These Weird Dreams**, the game casts you in the role of a mortally ill hospital patient. Complex surgery is the only way your life can be saved, and so you are wheeled, semi-conscious, into the operating theatre. As you fall under the influence of the anaesthetic, your sense reel and you begin to float into your own mind, a mind infested by all manner of nightmarish fantasies. Unless you can defeat the demonic monsters that threaten you in your mind, you won't recover from the operation and will be trapped forever in your own warped mind. Nasty.

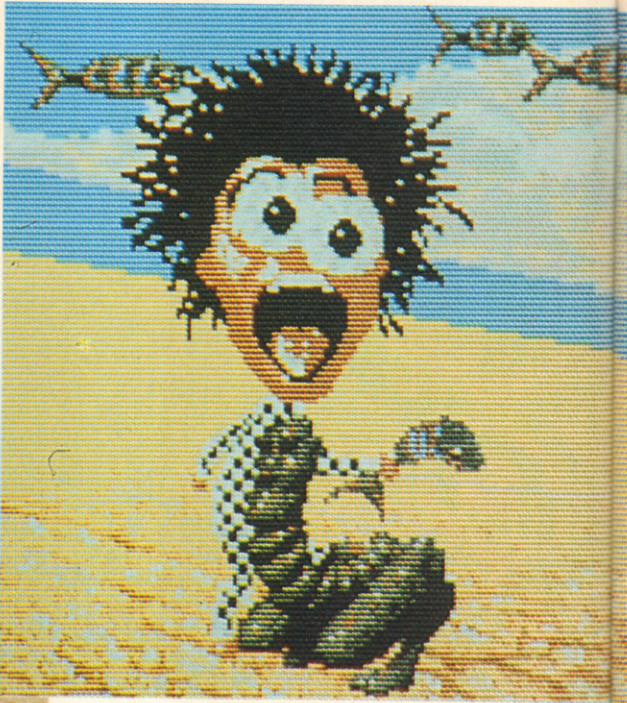


Watch that ball carefully. It may have a nasty surprise in store for you.

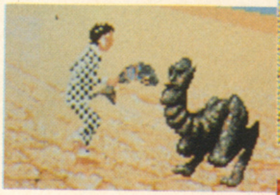
Your nightmare begins, strangely enough, inside the hall of mirrors at an imaginary fairground. From here you can 'warp' to and from your different fantasies, each one posing it's own particular problem. The aim of the game is to collect orbs (four in total) which you can use to escape from your dreams. The problems arise when you realise that a series of peculiar puzzles must be solved before each orb can be collected.



That wasp holds an all-important magic orb. Now, how do you get him to drop it?



Naturally the game is of a pretty weird nature. It's presented in a similar way to the ageing 8-bit classic Frankie Goes To Hollywood. Dressed in your hospital pyjamas, your on-screen alter-ego is taken through a series of scrolling screens on your quest for orbs. Your weird dreams contain such oddities as fish that fly in shoals over barren desert landscapes, mutant man-eating footballs and ravenous sets of giant gnashers, superbly animated in Terry Gilliam style. And that's not all. At certain points in the game you're given a choice of doors to progress to the next section of the game. Choose the wrong one and you just might end up bitten in two (displayed in the most gory graphic detail possible).

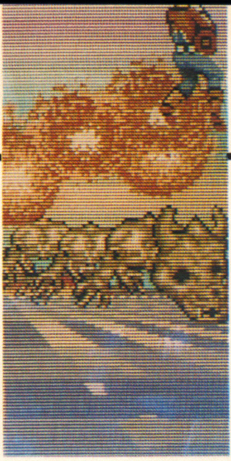


One of the first problems you encounter. That big lump of gristle on the right won't hesitate to sink his fangs into you, so act fast. But what exactly do you have to do to get past him?

E NIGHT

AARRGH! Your pyjama-clad alter-ego falls foul to the boney thing in the desert section.

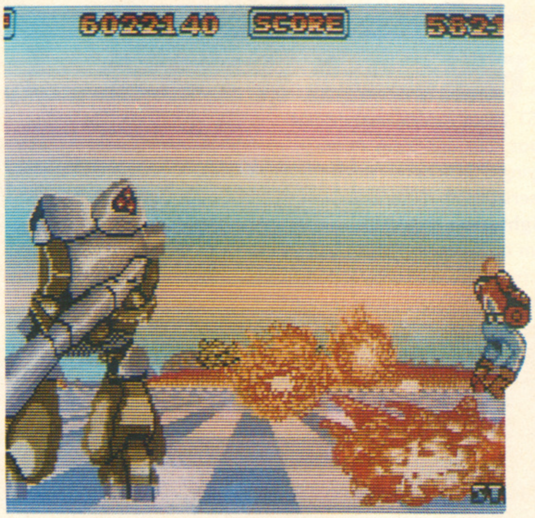
Weird Dreams is probably the most appropriate game title to appear in a long while. It's weird with a capital 'W'. Programmed by James Hutchby with graphics by Herman Serrano (the man behind Rainbird's **OCP Art Studio, Weird Dreams** looks like it could well turn out to be THE game of the year. No-one will miss out as it's due for release on Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC – but don't hold your breath. **Weird Dreams** won't make it onto the streets until February next year.



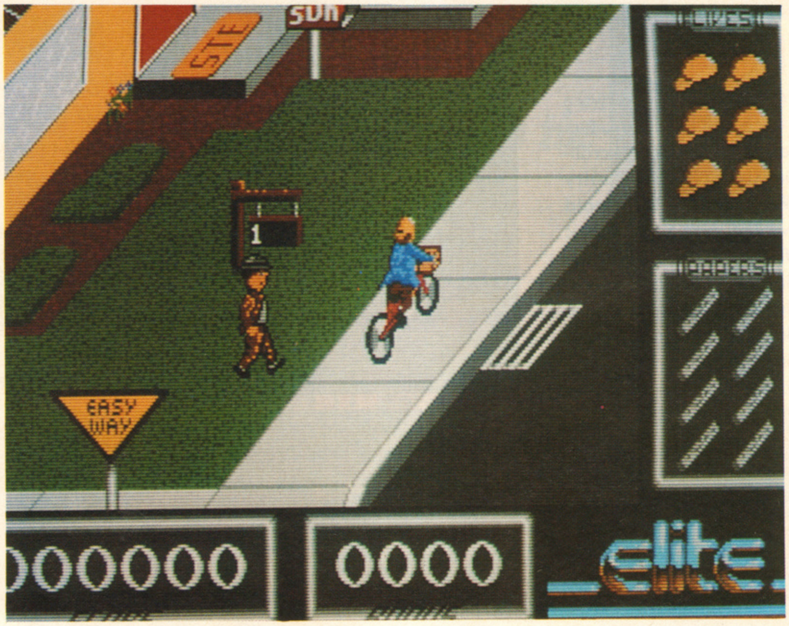
ELITE BITS

LICHFIELD based software house Elite are set to unleash another batch of ST, Amiga and PC releases over the next four months. The long-awaited conversion of Atari's immensely popular coin-op **Paperboy** is almost complete on all three formats and should be ready in time for a full review in the next issue. **Space Harrier** fans will be pleased to hear that Elite's very own sequel to the original ST version is now finished. Unimaginatively entitled **Space Harrier II,** it's effectively more of the same and is due to appear at the same time as the long overdue Amiga version of **Space Harrier.** Amiga owners will have to wait a little longer for the sequel though. Finally on the conversion front there's the equally long-awaited ST and Amiga interpretations of Capcom's **Ghosts 'n' Goblins.** Sadly, this classic blend of platform and shooting action won't hit the streets until early next year.

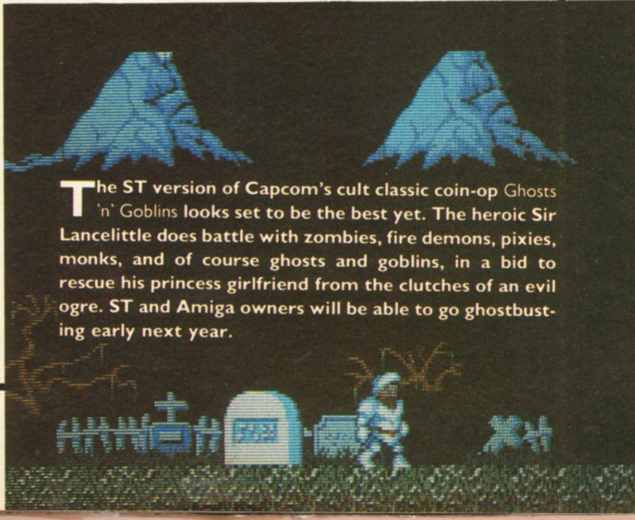
Elite's officially licensed sports trivia based on the BBC quiz show **A Question of Sport** is also scheduled for release in the very near future – as is **Mike Read's Pop Quiz,** another tantalising trivia romp based on the popular television series of the same name. Both games feature digitised faces and plenty of trivial questions for the answering.



Shoot to kill Space Harrier II **looking good on the ST, but can you spot the difference between the sequel and the original.**



Paperboy on the ST looks promising, and it could well turn out to be one of the most accurate conversions to date. It's released next month, so you can expect to see a review in Issue Three.

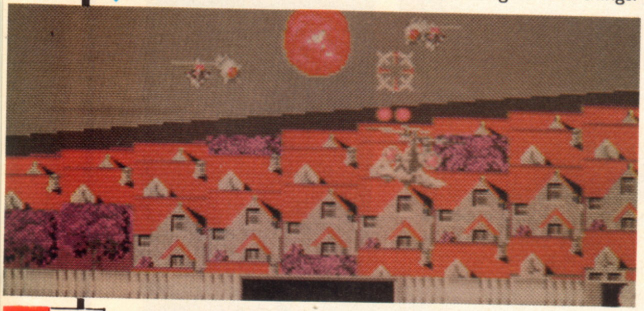


The ST version of Capcom's cult classic coin-op Ghosts 'n' Goblins **looks set to be the best yet. The heroic Sir Lancelittle does battle with zombies, fire demons, pixies, monks, and of course ghosts and goblins, in a bid to rescue his princess girlfriend from the clutches of an evil ogre. ST and Amiga owners will be able to go ghostbusting early next year.**

NEWS

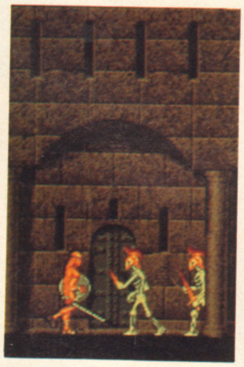
MARTECH BREAK 16-BIT SILENCE

SOON to appear on the ST (with Amiga versions not far behind) are two shoot 'em ups from Martech. **Hellfire Attack** see you flying a helicopter through a series of increasingly difficult aerial combat scenarios, all in Sega-esque 3D. **Phantom Fighter** on the other hand, is a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up written by Irish-based programming outfit Emerald (who are currently writing **The Running Man** for Grandslam, amongst other things.

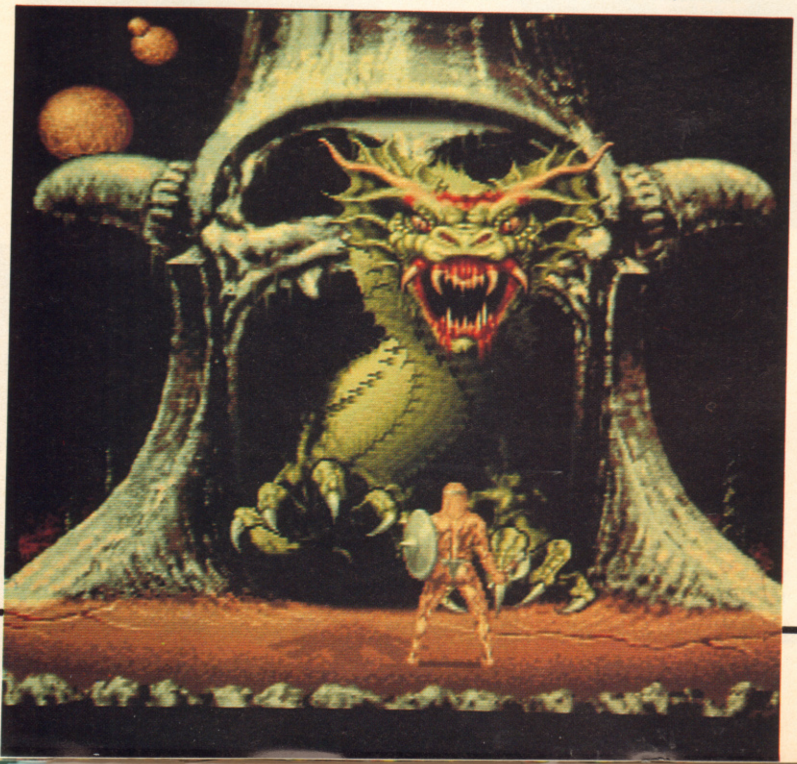


ONE of the most popular cult TV shows of the 60's, The Munsters is soon to have its very own computer game. Newly launched software label Again Again have acquired the rights to the show, which is currently being re-run on Channel 4. The game is being programmed by Teque, previously responsible for **Terramex** and **Pacmania** (reviewed last issue).

LINEL



SWISS software house Linel, producers of the vertically scrolling shoot 'em up **Insanity Fight** and the **Arkanoid** variant with a prehistoric flavour, **Crack,** has three imminent Amiga-only releases. First to see the light of day and reviewed in the next issue is a boxing game entitled **The Champ,** and hot on its heels is **Dragon Slayer,** an arcade adventure involving plenty of exploration and fighting action. Last but by no means least there's a skateboarding simulation called **Skate Of The Art** . . . which won't appear until February of next year.

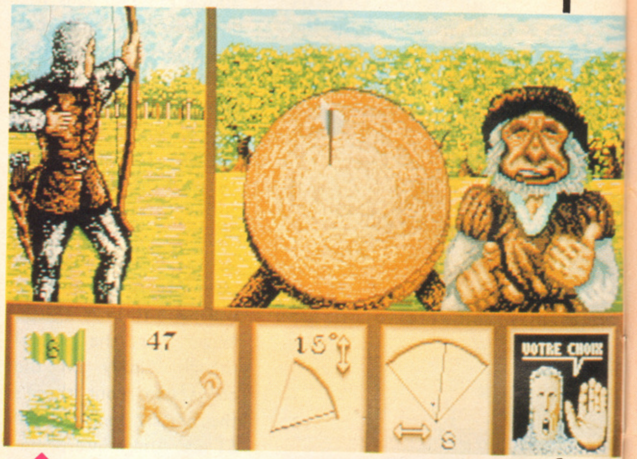


UBI SOFT

THREE ST and Amiga titles are due from French software house Ubi Soft during the coming months. **Puffy's Saga** is an offbeat **Gauntlet**-inspired affair in which Puffy and his girlfriend Puffyn are trapped in a mystical alien world full of mazes, monsters, dungeons and demons. Both versions should appear in time for review in the next issue, and there's a PC version following in December.

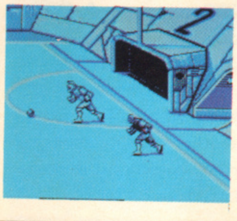
Sword fighting, archery and other mediaeval delights are combined with a subtle hint of strategy in **Iron Lord.** The scenario has it that your father has been deposed by his evil brother and it's up to you to recover the throne, get an army together and prove your worth in a series of trials. Which is exactly what we shall be doing next month . . .

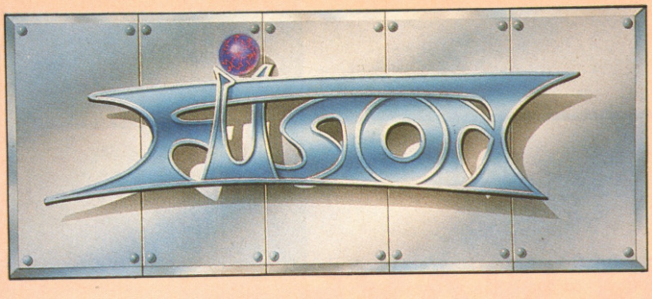
Finally there's **Skateball,** a futuristic ice hockey simulation featuring plenty of violence. How it compares to Image Works' **Speedball** you can find out in Issue Three . . .



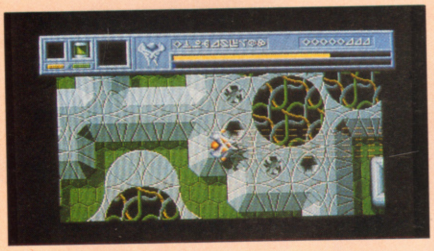
▲ **The archery from Ubi Soft's** Iron Lord.

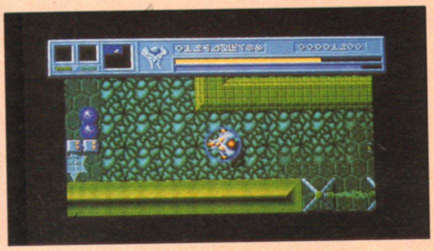
▼ **Will** Skateboard **wipe the floor with the Bitmap Brother's brilliant** Speedball

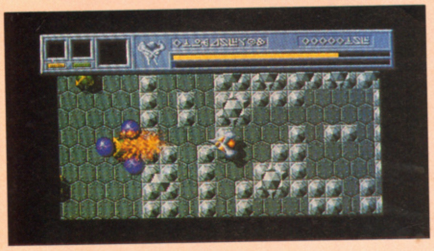


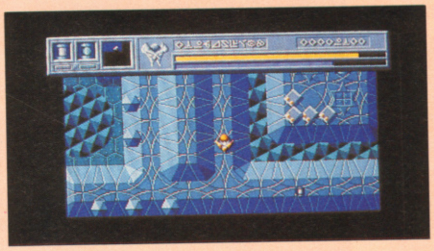


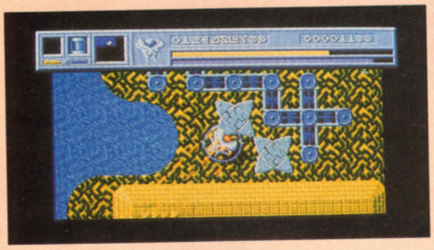
13 Levels of Arcade-Action . . . seeing is Believing!

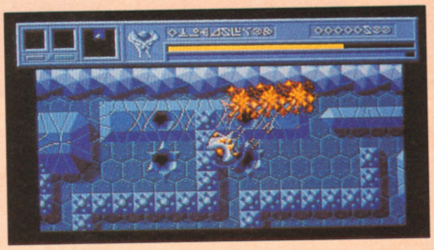


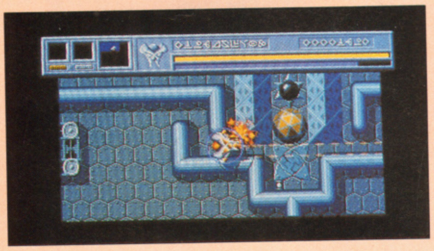


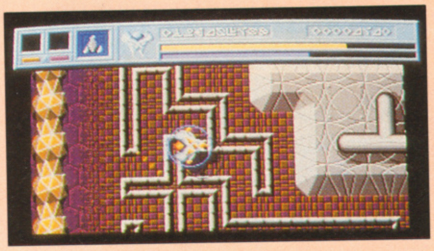


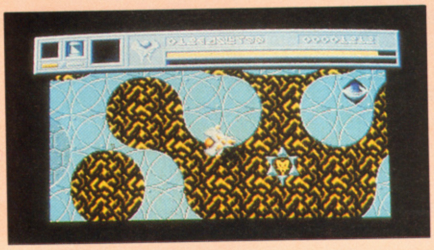


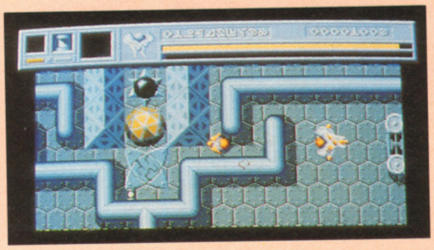




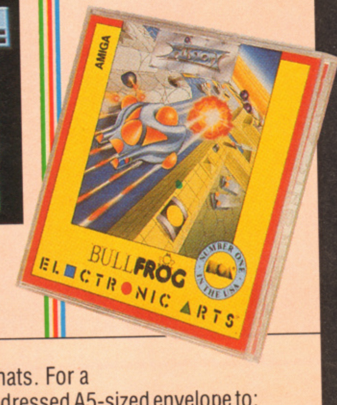








NOW on the Amiga. Coming soon on the Atari ST.



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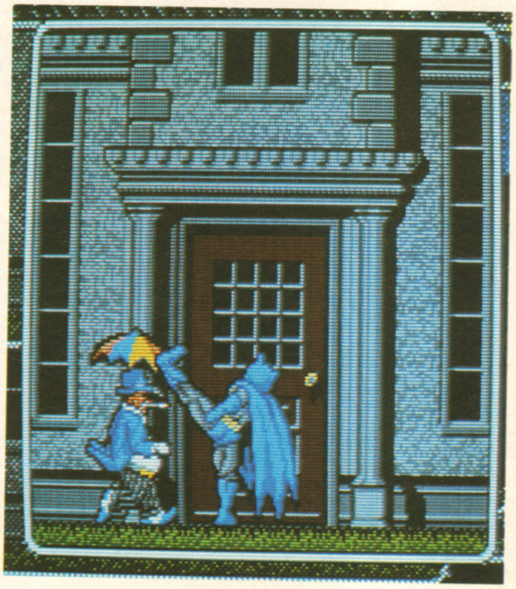
OCEAN WAVE

FROM his first appearance in Detective Comics over 50 years ago, Batman has become a household name, with a cult, camp television series and film and his bat-belt, along with plenty of contemporary works, such as Frank Miller's **The Dark Night** and **Batman: Year One,** and more recently, Alan Moore's **Killing Joke.** and then there was Ocean's computer game . . . a forced persepective arcade adventure from 8-bit hit makers Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond (who, incidentally, are now working on an arcade game for Rare).

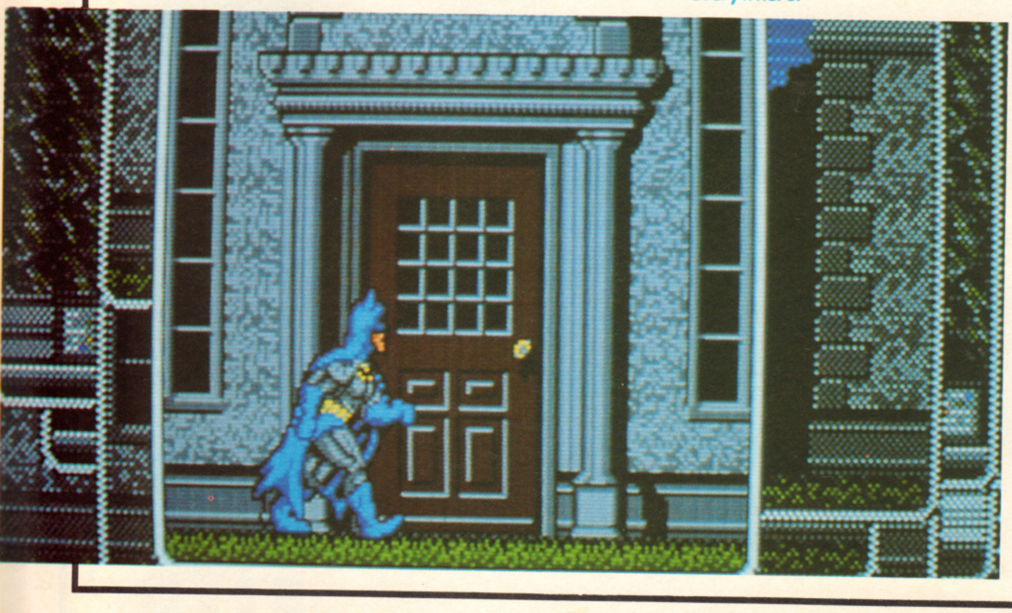
Ocean's second binary interpretation has been written by Special FX, previously responsible for past Ocean 8-bit hits **Firefly** and **Gutz,** and takes the form of an arcade adventure with beat 'em up overtones. Unlike the previous incarnation, this version is presented in true comic book style and comes in two parts, divided as separate stories or plots. Each section takes place in the sprawling metropolis of Gotham City and comprises all the best-known locations such as the batcave, Wayne Mansion and the Police Headquarters. As Batman your objective is to thwart the plans of your two deadliest enemies, the Joker and the Penguin, who both have their own dastardly schemes for world domination. The Penguin, for example, plans to overrun the world with thousands of robotic penguins, while the Joker has kidnapped Robin.

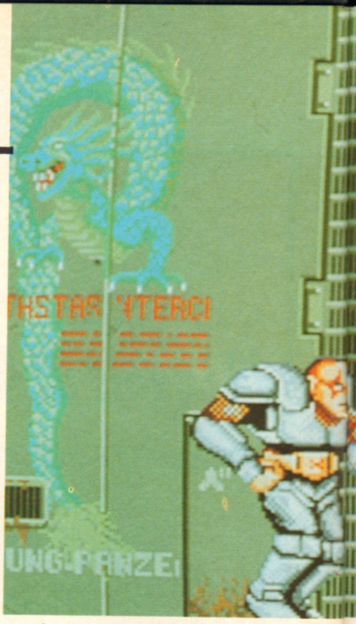
Apart from plenty of typical Batman-style brawling action there are many puzzles to solve, with help in the form of caption-like text in the corner of the screen. Work on **Batman** is nearly completed, and it should be ready for release in late November. Meanwhile Special FX are likely to be working on another licence for Ocean

The caped crusader comes face to face with the evil Penguin in Ocean's second game of the show/film/book/T-shirt/record etc. Could this confrontation result in a typical Batman style bout of fisticuffs? Find out next week...

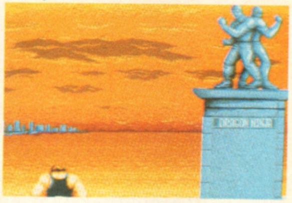


The forthcoming conversion of Batman **on the ST, featuring a neat comic strip approach which overlays a new screen onto the previous ones. It looks like there's going to be plenty of icon-driven fun for Bat-fans everywhere.**





Dragon Ninja, the latest Konami coin-oip conversion to come from Imagine. This Amiga screenshot gives you an idea of what to expect, and as you can see it's looking pretty damn good.



UPDATE

A ST PC

NETHERWORLD

Hewson

Review: Issue One, pg 74

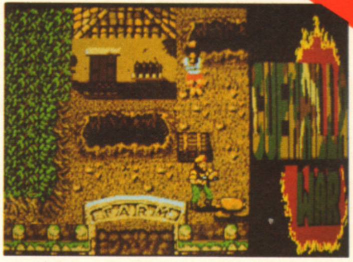
A There's really nothing worth adding to the comments made in the first issue. So here are some ratings to put things into perspective

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	69%
SOUND	43%
PLAYABILITY	74%
VALUE	61%
OVERALL	**70%**

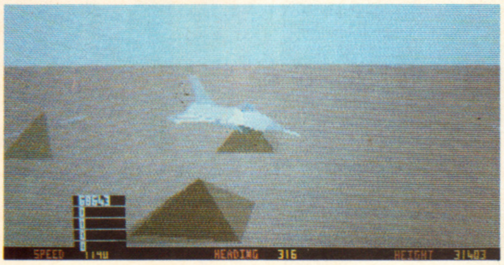
DAN GER
DAN GER
DAN

NEWS

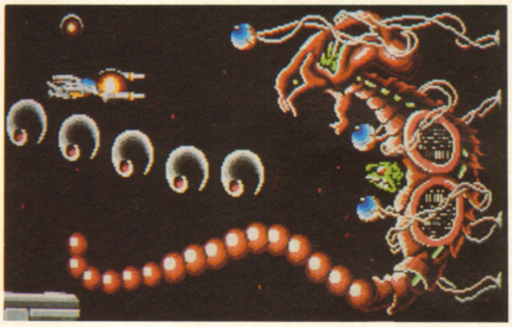
Imagine's conversion of *Guerilla War* –SNK's second sequel to their cult classic *Ikari Warriors* is coming along very nicely, thank you. The ST version pictured here should appear towards the end of this year, and it looks as though it's going to knock the stuffing out of Elite's conversion of *Ikari Warriors* and Microdeal's *Leatherneck*. The green bereted guerilla blasts his way through a farm, deep in enemy territory where even more trouble lies in store.



Spectrum Holobyte's F-16 Fighting Falcon simulator, Falcon, has impressed and captivated PC owners since its release. In fact it's so impressive, the Pentagon took an interest. Come December we should see ST and Amiga versions, conmplete with all the outstanding features that have made the PC original so popular. Seen here is the ST version.



Nearing completion in time for a Christmas re-lease... Electric Dreams' ST and Amiga conversions of the Irem coin-op *R-Type*. As you can see from this ST screenshot of the large alien at the end of Level One, the graphics are almost identical to its arcade stablemate. And judging by the quality of Electric Dreams' more recent conversions, 16-bit *R-Type* should play every bit as well as its coin-op parent.



ZYNAPS
Hewson
Issue One, pg 45

A Hewson haven't really taken advantage of the Amiga's graphic capabilities, with sprites and backdrops identical to the ST version. At least they've had the good sense to use a few suitable sampled blasting sounds, making Zynaps marginally more playable. One of the few decent shoot 'em ups of its type available, and certainly worth a look.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	65%
SOUND	71%
PLAYABILITY	73%
VALUE	64%

OVERALL 74%

SKYCHASE
Image Works
Issue One, pg 34

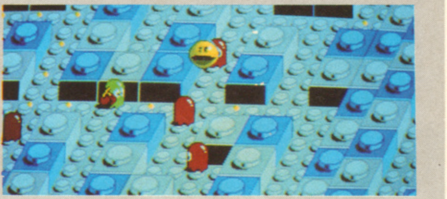
ST Oh dear, the ST icon was swapped with the Amiga icon and so the comment which appears with the review in the first issue actually applies to the Amiga version. The ST interpretation is slightly faster than its Commodore counterpart, and as a result is a tad more playable. The title tune and spot effects are still nothing to write home about, but as a two player head to head combat game it successfully manages to hold its fudge.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	53%
SOUND	45%
PLAYABILITY	70%
VALUE	56%

OVERALL 67%

PACMANIA
Grandslam
Issue One, pg 91

A Instead of simply dumping the ST version to Commodore's mean machine, programmers Teque have written Pacmania from scratch. And what a conversion. Amiga Pacmania is certainly one of the most impressive coin-op conversions to date. Silky smooth full screen scrolling, colourful sprites and backdrops, clean renditions of the original tunes and all the intermission sequences are included. Wonderful stuff worthy of any coin-op conversion connoisseur's time and money.



PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	82%
SOUND	73%
PLAYABILITY	88%
VALUE	79%

OVERALL 86%

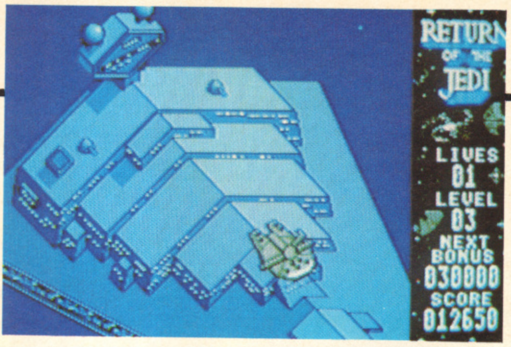
NEWS

OF TRIVIAL JEDIS

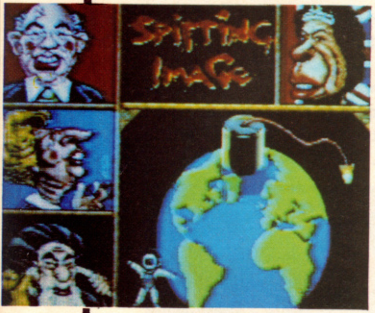
DOMARK have three new licensed titles approaching completion for release before the year is out. **Return Of The Jedi** is the third instalment in the series of **Star Wars** games. Unlike its vector graphic predecessors, **Jedi** is a forced persepective race and chase affair with shoot 'em up overtones. The player mounts a Speeder Bike and zooms through the heavily-foliated forests of Endor before flying into the metallic superstructure of the newly-built Deathstar in an attempt to destroy it.

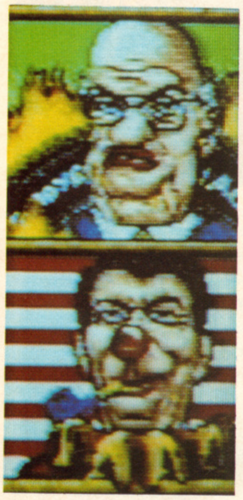
Not content with a competent binary interpretation of the **Trivial Pursuit** boardgame, Domark are set to release **Trivial Pursuit: A New Beginning.** This time it's set in space of all places, although the basic idea is still to answer loads of ridiculously pointless questions, so if you know exactly how many pairs of shoes Imelda Marcos owns, or what William Shakespeare's middle name was, this is right up your street.

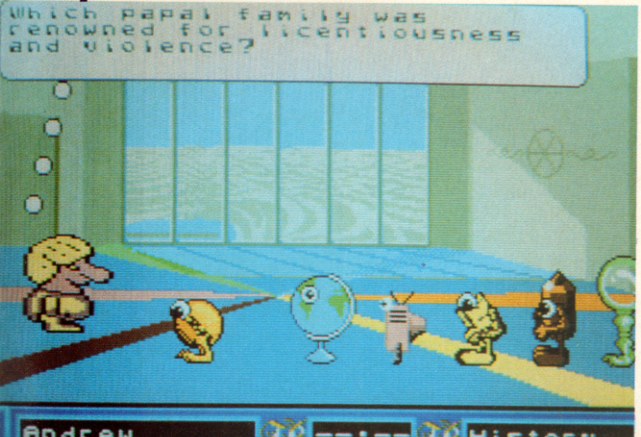
Finally, anyone who has been playing computer games since 1986 will probably remember the trouble Domark had over their 8-bit puzzle game **Splitting Images** (which had to be renamed to **Split Personalities** as the title was a little too close to Spitting Image for comfort). Well, Domark have learned their lesson and have snapped up the licence to produce a computer game based on the immensely popular satirical television show. Domark's **Spitting Image** takes the form of an offbeat beat 'em up which somehow manages to feature all of your fave characters from the show, such as the Ayatolla, Ronnie Reagan, and the Queen. Just how it fares you can find out in the next issue . . .



Step into Lando Calrissian's flight boots and take on the might of the hideous Galactic Empire, both in space and in the dense forests of Endor in Domark's conversion of the last game in the Star Wars **trilogy...** Return Of The Jedi**.**



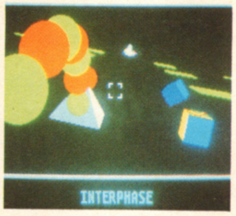


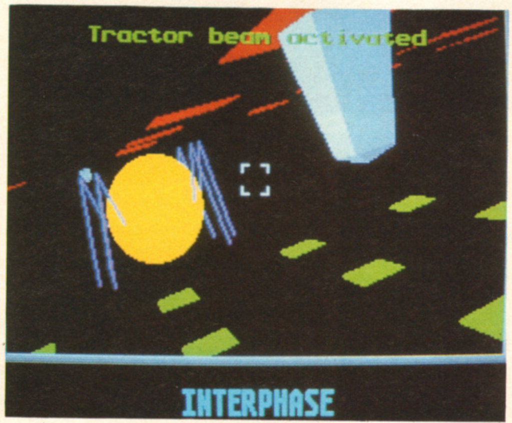

Which papal family was renowned for licentiousness and violence?

INTERPHASE

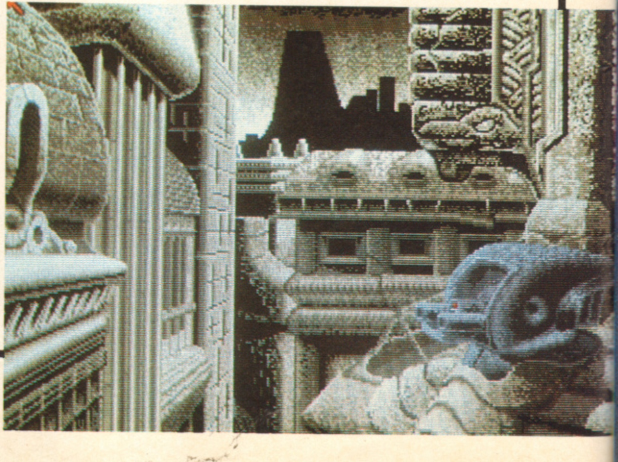
IMAGE Work's **Interphase** is an unusual blend of flight simulation and arcade adventure with some exceptionally smooth and fast filled 3D graphics to portray the action. Set in the far future, **Interphase** puts the player inside the huge master computer of a ruthless corporation that plans to dominate the world by hypnotising people... The computer controls all the security for the corporation's headquarters, and the player's mission is to manipulate the mainframe computer from within, so that the security systems can be shut down, allowing your agent on the outside world to infiltrate the building safely and retrieve valuable information which can avert the corporation's plans. Despite its hackneyed scenario, **Interphase** is shaping up very nicely indeed and should be ready in time for the beginning of next year.

Other Image Works projects currently under development are the conversions of Atari's brilliant sequel to **Asteroids** – **Blasteroids**, plus two interesting graphic adventures: the Middle Earth delights of **Palladin** and plenty of fantasy frolics in **Terrarium**. There's also a rather nifty looking shoot 'em up entitled **Crime Town Depths**. Further details will follow...




Tractor beam activated

One of the many unusual creatures encountered inside the master computer causing problems in Image Works' Interphase,



Part of the graphically impressive attract sequence for Image Work's new shoot 'em up, Crime Town Depths, **released (hopefully) before the end of this year.**

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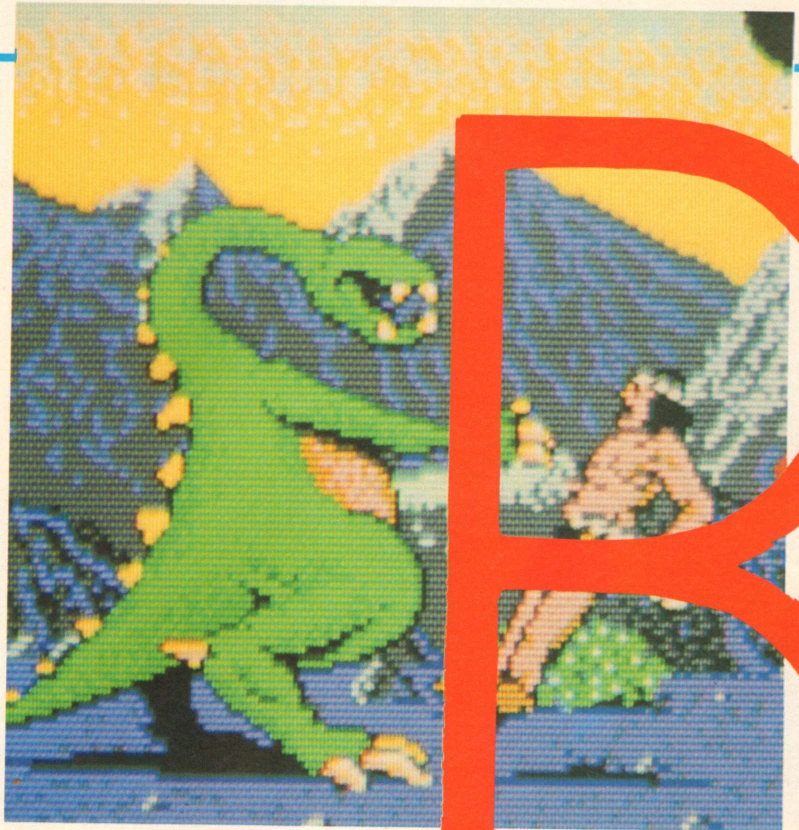
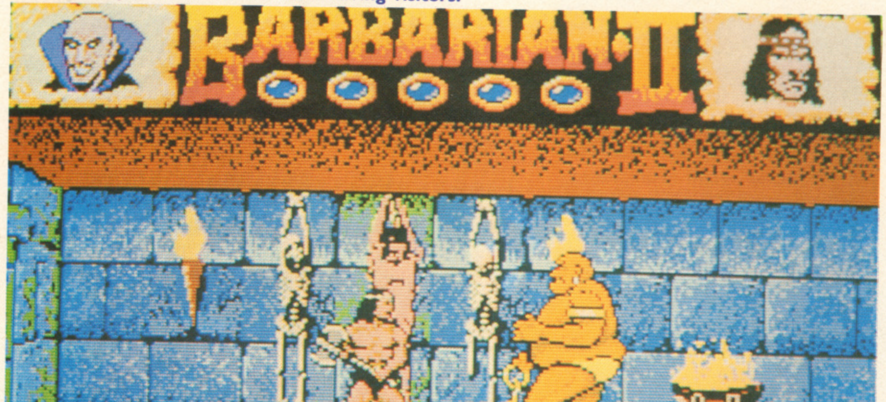
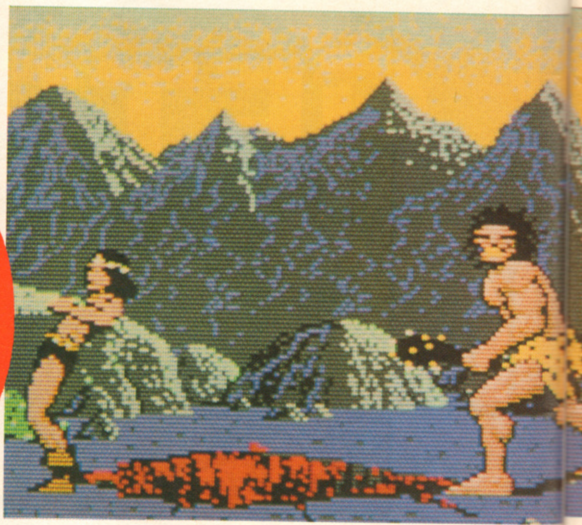
Barb



The greatest one-on-one combat game of last year was undoubtedly Palaces's **Barbarian**. The brilliant gameplay combined with the vivid graphic violence (such as the bloody decapitation sequence) to ensure huge popularity and a ban by the German government! The tremendous success of **Barbarian** made a sequel inevitable, and here it is, imaginatively titled **Barbarian II: The Dungeons of Drax.**

The dungeons of Level Three are quite tricky to negotiate, especially if you don't collect a key to unlock the doors. Animated prisoners 'decorate' most of the walls, and their bloated keeper isn't keen on them having visitors.





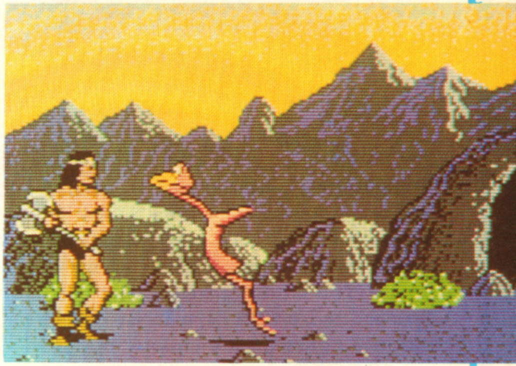
Sampled sound abound on all four levels. This is Level One, and here you can almost hear the realistic pig-like grunt of approval from the troglodyte as the Barbarian teeters on the brink of a pit... before releasing a scream as he plummets to his death.

Barbarian II takes over from where its predecessor left off. The evil sorceror Drax was defeated by the Barbarian when he attempted to kidnap the voluptuous Princess Mariana, he was banished to a dark and dreary cave on the outskirts of the civilised world. Word has it that Drax is once again hatching a devious plan to put himself back in power, and so the Barbarian has been ordered to journey out to Drax's lair and destroy him for good.

Unlike the original, which was a simple one or two-player combat game, **Barbarian II** is a large arcade adventure with combat elements. The dungeons of Drax are split into four separately loaded levels, each consisting of just over 25 screens (apart from the last which is a mere three screens long). The Barabrian has been redefined since the last game and now wields a large battleaxe. Moving from location to location is simply a matter of walking off the side of the screen,

arian II

Barbarian is back, complete with bulging breasts and flowing hair – and that's the bloke! Gary Whitta hacks and slays his way into Drax's domain in Palace's latest blockbuster and finds himself having the time of his life.

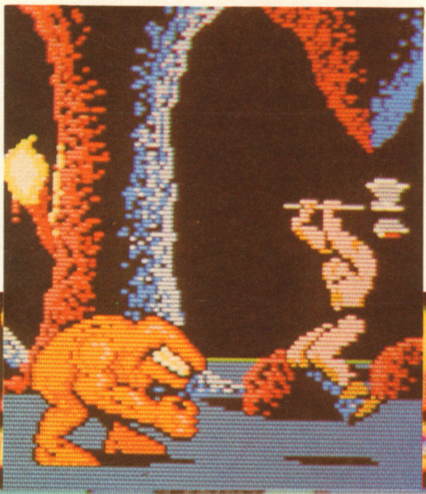


Another strange adversary from the first level... A mutant chicken clucks and struts across the screen, then leaps with a blood-curdling 'Squawk!' at the surprised Barbarian. Any more of that a hefty smack with your axe will have the blighter screeching in pain instead!

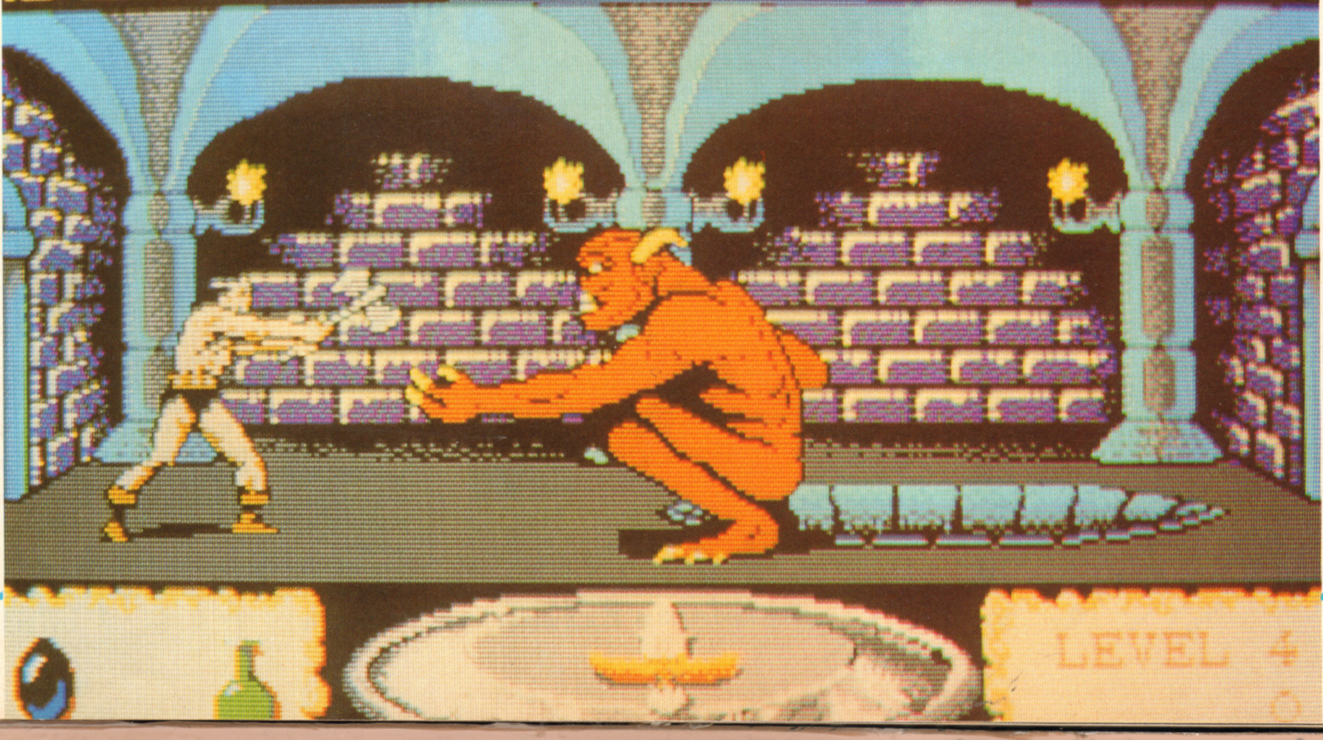
when it is replaced by the next. Barbie (as he is known around the office) can also move 'into' the screen via specific gaps in the scenery behind him.

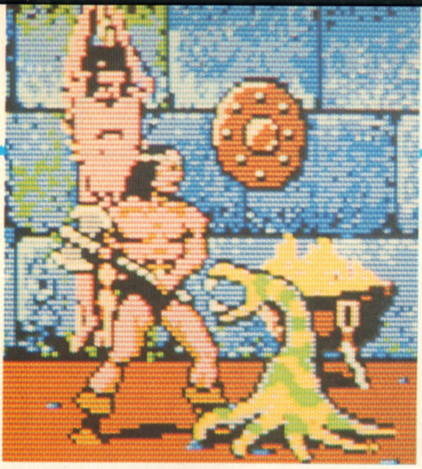
Of course Barbie can't just move around the dungeons as easily as that. Drax's minions lurk around every corner and all have orders to kill him on sight.

Fighting is essentially the same as the original game too, with an array of combat moves such as leg chop, kick and the infamous flying neck chop all available. When a creature is finally defeated, achieved by relentlessly



Inside Drax's domain on the fourth and final level, the Barbarian comes face to face with two huge, grotesque creatures. This is the first, barring our bronzen hero's progress... we won't give the game away and show you any further though.

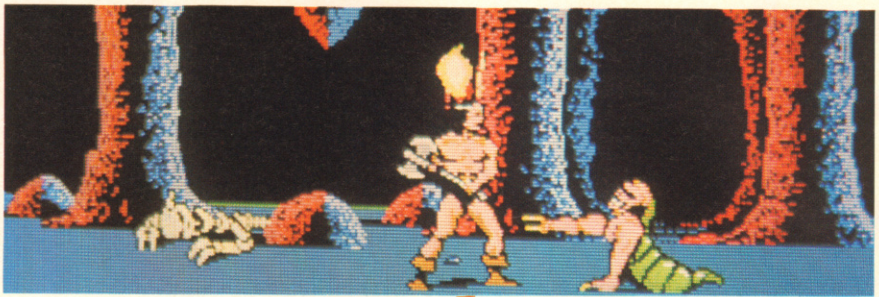




whacking it with the axe until its energy is depleted, it dies in any of a series of hideously gory ways that would make even a video nasty fan wince! The shuffling triffid-like monsters are decapitated in a spray of blood and the heart of the chubby dungeon guard is ripped out of his chest and bounces across the floor in vivid detail. Another impressive death sequence takes place when the troglodytes, the dragons and various creatures are totalled. The ground opens up and the monster explodes in a cloud of green smoke which is then sucked down into the crevasse, accompanied by a marvellous sampled thunderclap.

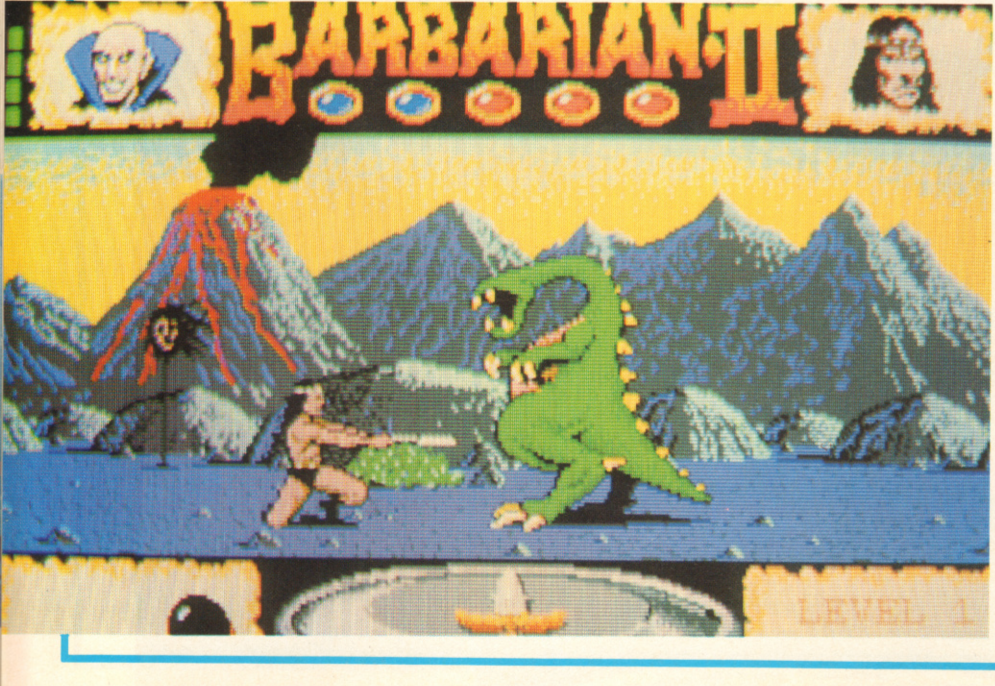
Between the stints of furious fighting there is maze searching to be done; keys must be found along with extra weapons such as shields, which help to provide added resistance to attack. And all this must be done while avoiding the dungeon's inanimate perils which come in the form of lava streams and gaping bottomless pits which immediately cost Barbie a life if he strays too near and falls in. Jumping at the right time is the key to passing these pits, and even then there's a chance of a large tentacle shooting out from the pit and pulling you down!

Drax lies at the end of the final level and is protected by two huge ravenous monsters. If Barbie can get past both of these he can take on Drax head-to-head. Drax puts up a very good fight, and if he can be killed...



The second level comprises a seemingly never ending cavernous maze, complete with a bizarre assortment of creatures. This weird-looking chap doesn't take too kindly to less deformed beings such as your bronzen self, and lashes out with speed, accuracy and ferocity.

The large green dragon on Level One lets out a convincing roar of pain as the Barbarian hacks away at it. The Barbarian tends to grunt a bit when he's hit too! Incidentally, the sword on the shield at the bottom of the screen acts as a compass (it always points north) and an aid to mapping the maze-like terrain.



ST

Barbarian was great, but Barbarian II is even better. It's taken the original combat formula and improved it no end with the addition of the arcade adventure elements. The problem with the original Barabarian was that you could only fight other human opponents, and the whole thing could get rather 'samey' after a long while. The huge array of different nasties just waiting to pick fights with you solves this problem. Each creature has its own specific attack pattern, and so each one must be dealt with differently. there's a lot to be learnt before any kind of proficiency is achieved. The graphics are of a high standard, and although some of the animation on certain sprites can at times be jerky, the bright colours and excellent definition compensates adequately. There are loads of sampled 'ooh's, 'aargh's, grunts and wails of pain to accompany the action, and the four levels are big enough to keep even the most hardened gamer going for quite some time. Definitely worth a look.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Mid November
GRAPHICS	83%
SOUND	95%
PLAYABILITY	86%
VALUE	79%
OVERALL	**85%**

A

Barbarian II is currently being converted by Richard Leinfellner, the man behind the original Amiga Barbarian and the conversion of the Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit. Work is going well and it should be released sometime before Christmas. Expect to see a few minor graphic differences and to hear some beefier sound samples, but otherwise things will mostly stay the same. Watch this space next month for a full update.

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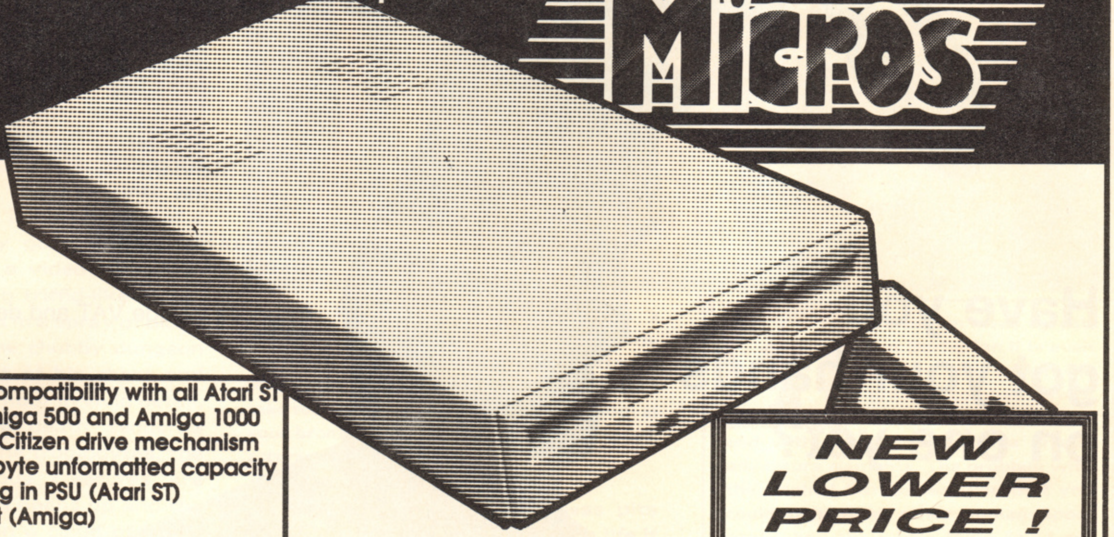

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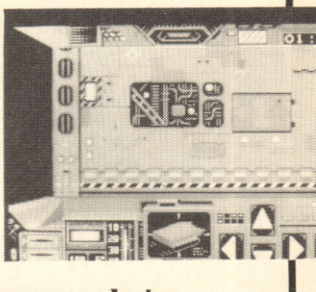
Driller



Driller promises to be the complete three dimensional experience, thanks to Freescape, Incentive's much publicised graphics system. But does a game about drilling rigs make for a fun time? Paul Boughton gets the bit between his teeth.

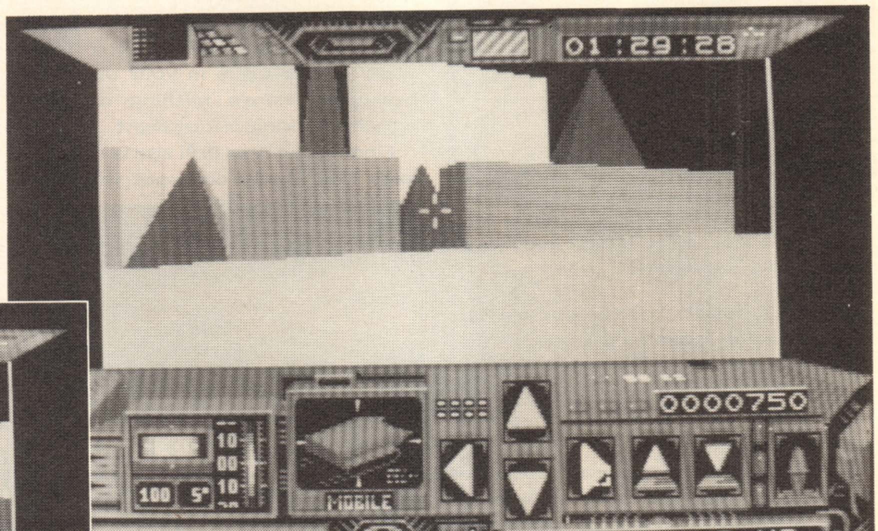
A game which involves gas drilling rigs — even on distant moons — isn't likely to get me frothing with excitement. Not even if a huge meteor is hurtling on a collision course and everything is about to end with a huge bang. And, for me, **Driller** is certainly no thriller, providing no instant gratification. Patience is definitely a virtue here.

The story unfolds on the heavily-mined moon of Mitral which circles the planet Evath, colonised by humans escaping an ecological catastrophe on good old mother Earth.

The mining was carried out by a race of outlaws called the Ketars who have now fled the ravaged satellite. A vast amount of gas has built up below Mitral's surface, turning the moon into a potential bomb. Should the gas ignite, the planet will explode and Evath will be blasted into a new orbit, killing thousands instantly and leaving the rest to face a chilling death as temperatures fall. To make matters worse, scientists have calculated that a meteor from deep space is due to smash into Mitral in a mater of hours, popping it like a balloon.

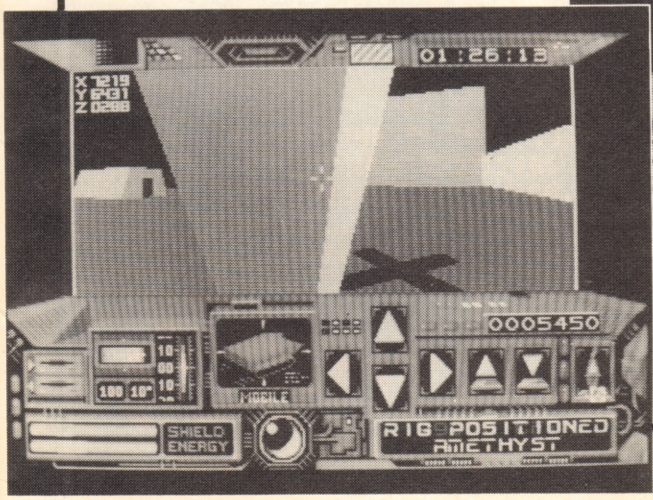
Your mission is to explore, locate and make safe the 18 sectors of Mitral by positioning a drilling rig over the hidden gas pockets and releasing this deadly vapour. All before the meteor strikes.

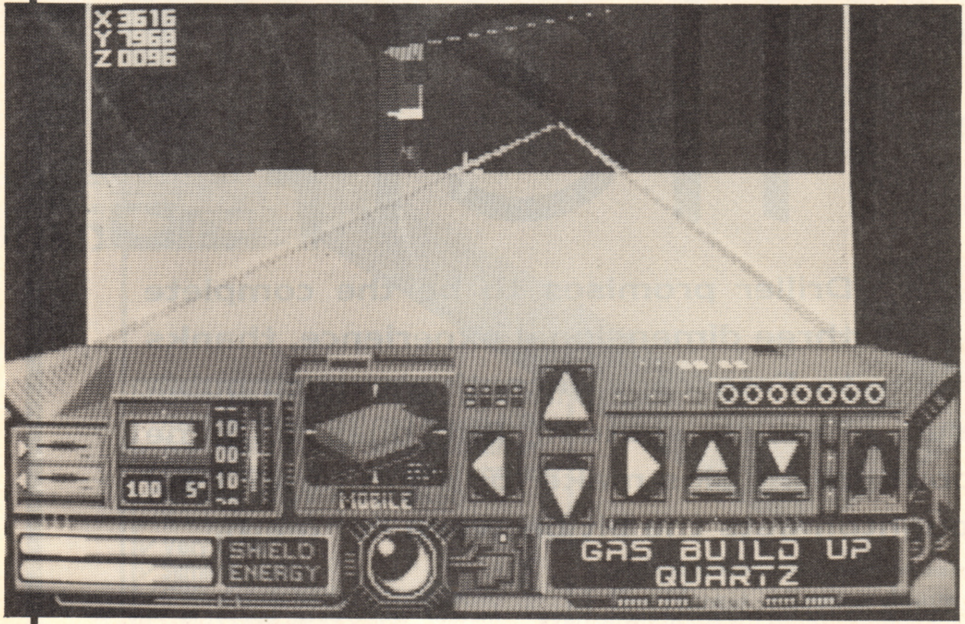
The gameplay breaks down into four main tasks: you have to access and



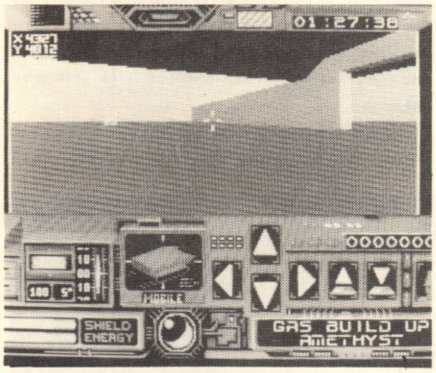
Still fails to convey the fact that Incentive seem to have Freescape (TM) working well after over a year in development. But where's the gameplay to complement the graphics? Maybe Dark Side **has the answer . . .**

Aha! X marks the spot . . . beam down your drilling rig and let off a little steam. This is another example of Incentive's considerate gameplay.





A busy panel surrounds the slow-paced action of Driller. **The arrows to the right can be used to move your craft, while the bars to the bottom left of the picture are shield and energy levels.**



An example of one of the more simplistic puzzles found in Driller. **See this little switch on the wall? What happens when you shoot it? . . .**

enter each sector, find the gas pocket and release at least 50 per cent of the gas; locate and absorb Rubicon crystals (to power your excavation probe) and avoid or destroy the laser beacons and scanner defences.

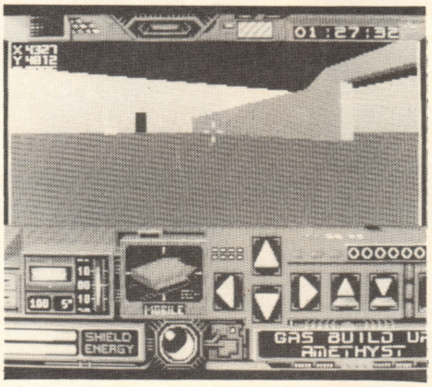
To aid exploration, the package includes a "three-dimensional mapping module" which, with the help of glue or tape, builds (in best Blue Peter tradition) into a polyhedral model of Mitral showing all 18 surfaces and where they are in relation to each other.

This, in a roundabout way, brings me to the layout of the console controls. Click the mouse on a series of arrows. This doesn't make for speedy movement or fast responses, especially as dials and digital displays bombard you with information throughout.

The 'feel' you get when exploring is quite impressive, realistically approaching a doorway, wondering who or what is inside. But any tension which builds up is in your own mind. Normally there's nothing dreadfully exciting lurking out of sight.

Finding the first drill site is relatively easy (see if you can spot the cross), but others are harder to find. Clues to solving the game's puzzles are, apparently, hidden in the story booklet. This spells out the background to the game in exhaustive detail. But it's hardly rivetting reading.

Explore enough and you come across tunnels, teleports and a reconnaissance jet. This allows you to fly and hover over the moon and is ideal for mapping, a task which is essential to the game's completion.



Guess what? Shooting the switch opens a previously hidden doorway. Later on in the game there's bridges to 'build' and plenty of aggressive gun emplacements to avoid.

A

Freescape, the programming wizardry that puts you right in the game, succeeds in generating one of the best three-dimensional environments I've so far experienced. Movement is virtually unrestricted, the perspective realistic, the landscape solid. The manipulation of the complex 3D image is impressive. However, decent graphics don't make up for that vital gaming ingredient — excitement. Is there anything better than the quickening of the pulse, the rush of energy and that slight apprehension that you're experiencing, something you're not sure you can master. But you're going to spend a hell of a lot of time trying to? But for me that excitment is missing from Driller. There's no tension, no buzz. It feels like a neat programming trick in desperate need of a good game idea. It's impressive, in many ways innovative, but ultimately soulless. Hopefully the sequel, Dark Side, will provide more edge-of-the-seat thrills.

PRICE	£25.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	71%
PLAYABILITY	60%
VALUE	52%

OVERALL 65%

ST

Identical to its Commodore cousin in almost every aspect (apart from the slightly weaker sound) this version suffers from the same drawbacks.

PRICE	£25.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	70%
PLAYABILITY	60%
VALUE	52%

OVERALL 65%

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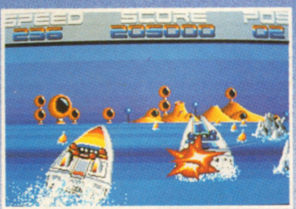

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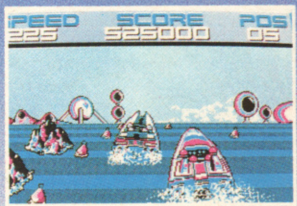

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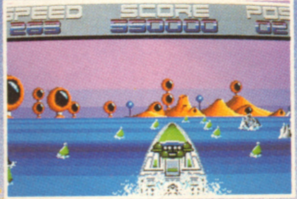

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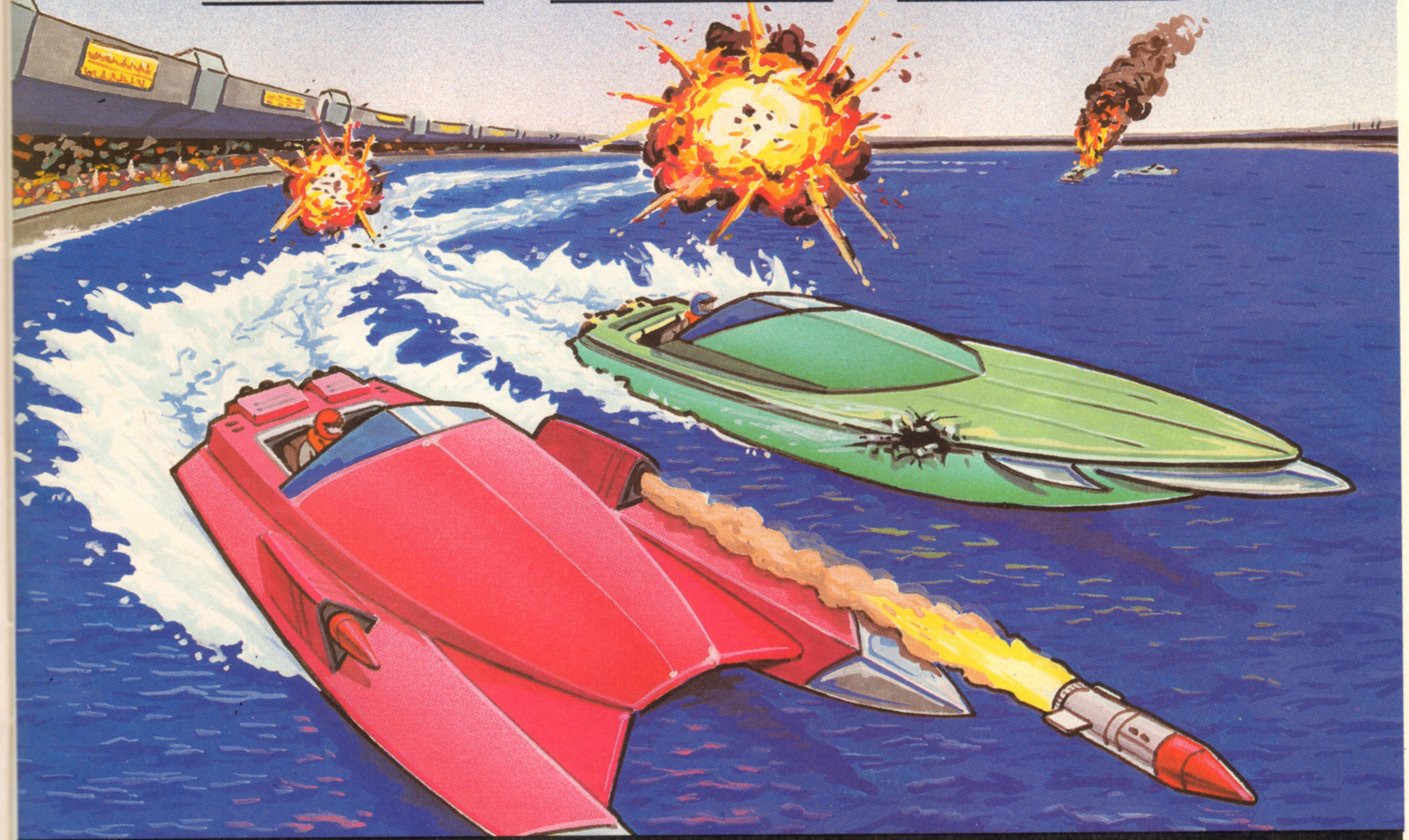

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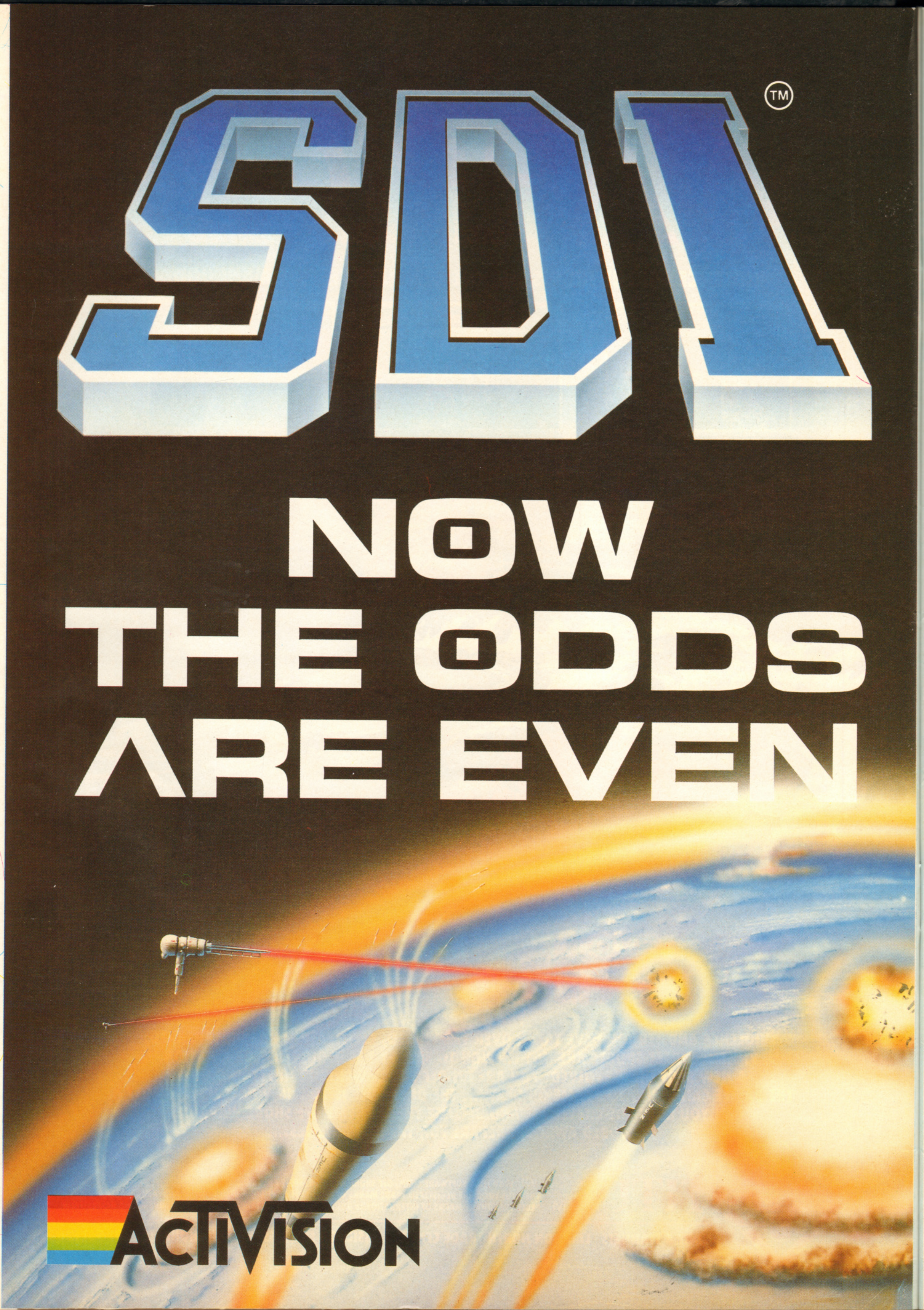

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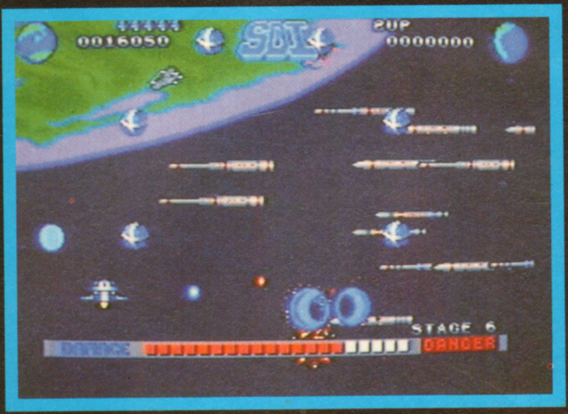

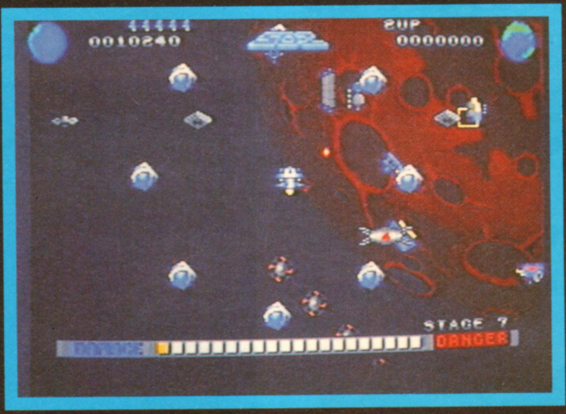

Atari ST screen shots shown

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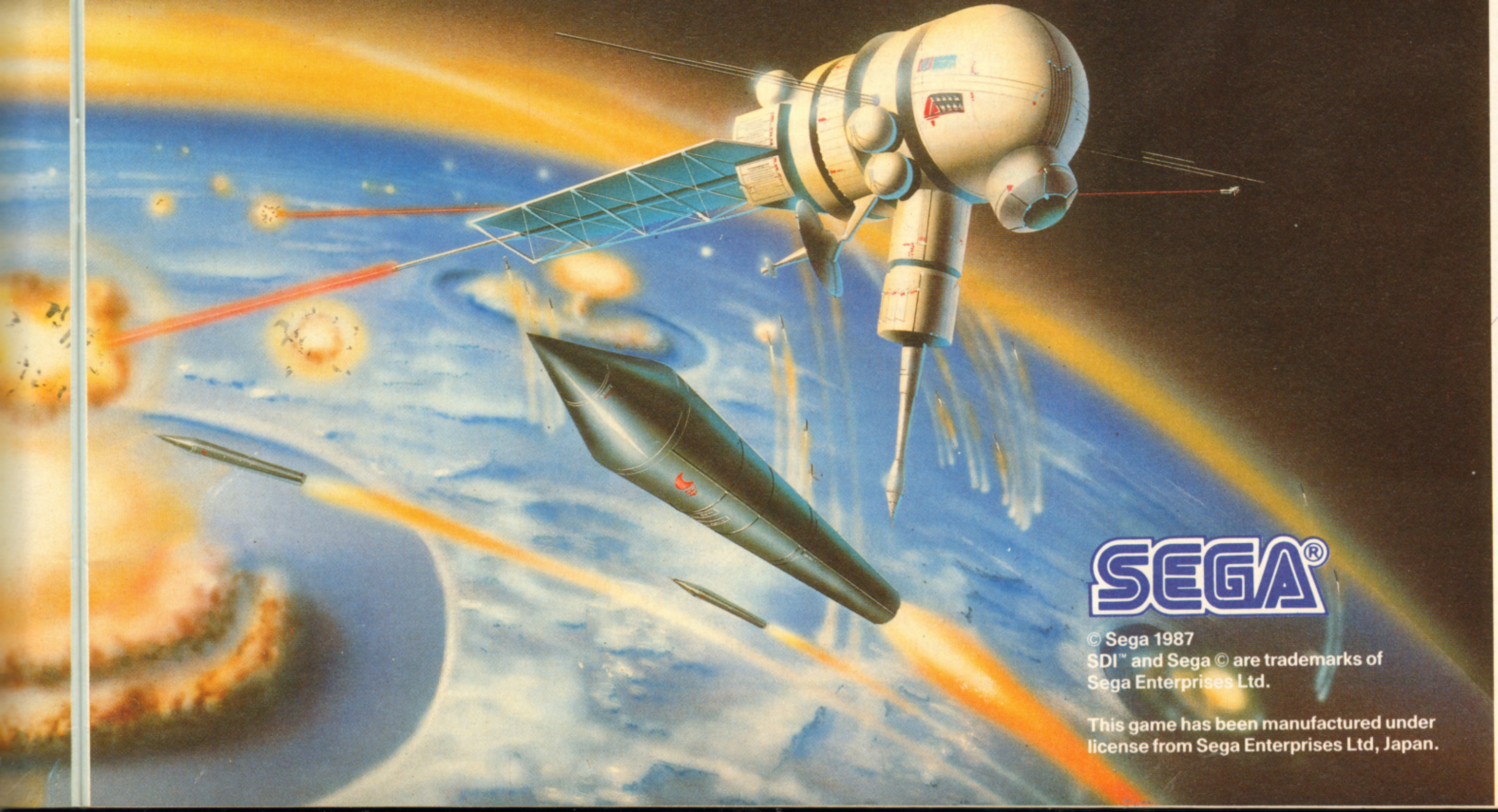

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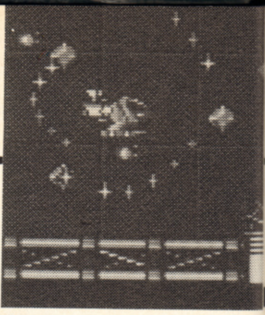
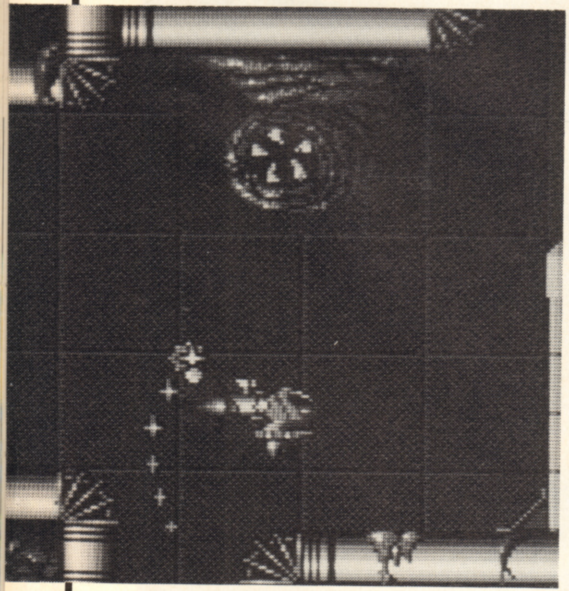
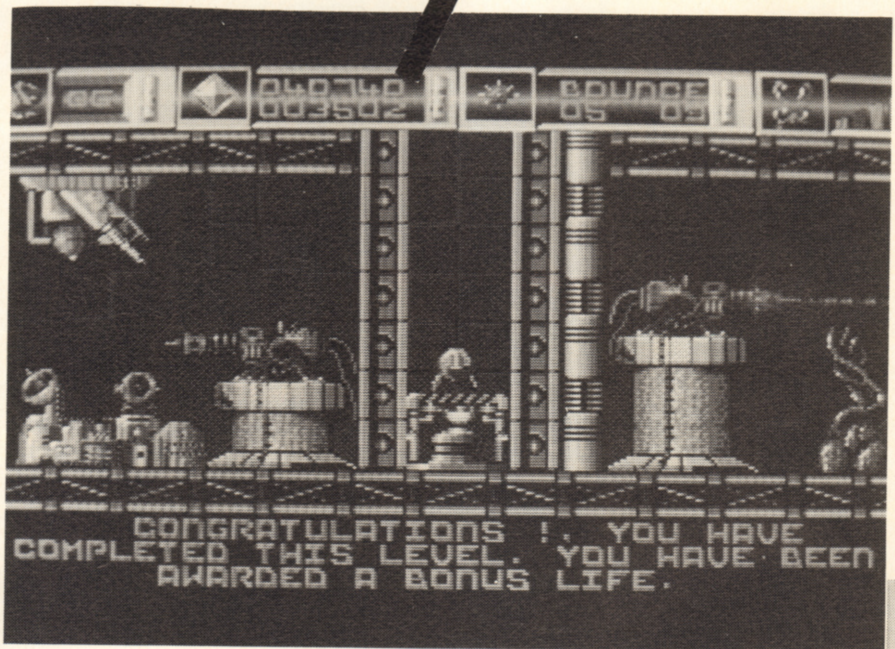


After sending us round the bend with Nebulus, Hewson now flies us to a distant planet in its latest collect and shoot 'em up. Steve Jarratt goes underground to indulge in a bit of treasure hunting...

Deep inside a subterranean complex, a lone ship begins a mission to recover valuable gems and equipment stolen by space pirates. The underground stronghold is split into four levels, set over 150 flick-screens; progress is continuous and once left, the last screen cannot be re-entered.



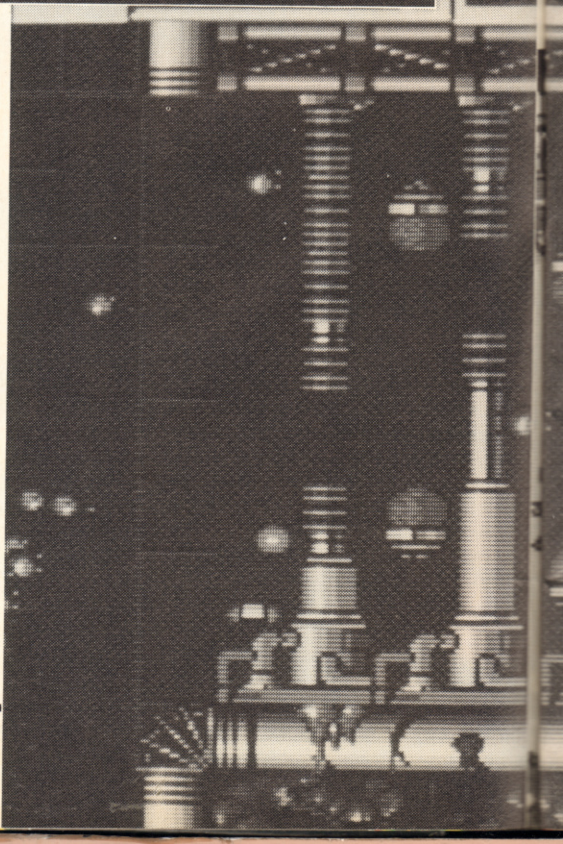
There are certainly plenty of strange creatures to avoid (or preferably destroy) during your galactic scavenge . . . just take a look at the teeth on that. A spinning orbital will quickly put paid to this deadly death-spitting worm-like being. Provided you don't bite the dust first . . .



CONGRATULATIONS !, YOU HAVE COMPLETED THIS LEVEL. YOU HAVE BEEN AWARDED A BONUS LIFE.

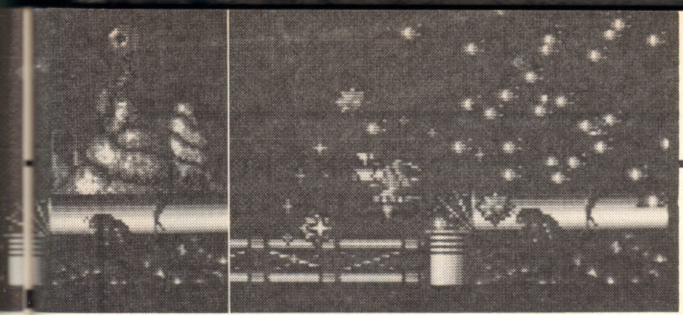
Level One completed . . . the good ship Cybernoid descends to Level Two, and yet more of the same – only harder!

Atypically awkward but not impossible to negotiate screen. The Cybernoid is armed for bear, with its three arsenal of spinning orbitals, rear-firing cannons, shield and assortment of bombs.



Sent by the Federation, the good ship Cybernoid has to negotiate each screen retrieving as many of the stolen goods as possible, while running the gauntlet of the mercenaries' defence systems.

In order to protect itself from gun emplacements, alien vegetation and the pirates themselves, the Cybernoid carries a pretty mean arsenal of destruction. A forward-firing blaster is in permanent residence, and may be accompanied by one of five additional weapon systems, selected at will by the function keys. Bouncing bombs, seeker missiles, mines, bombs and



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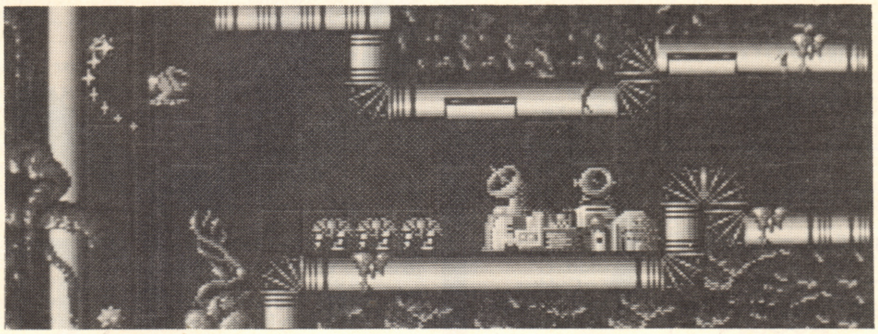
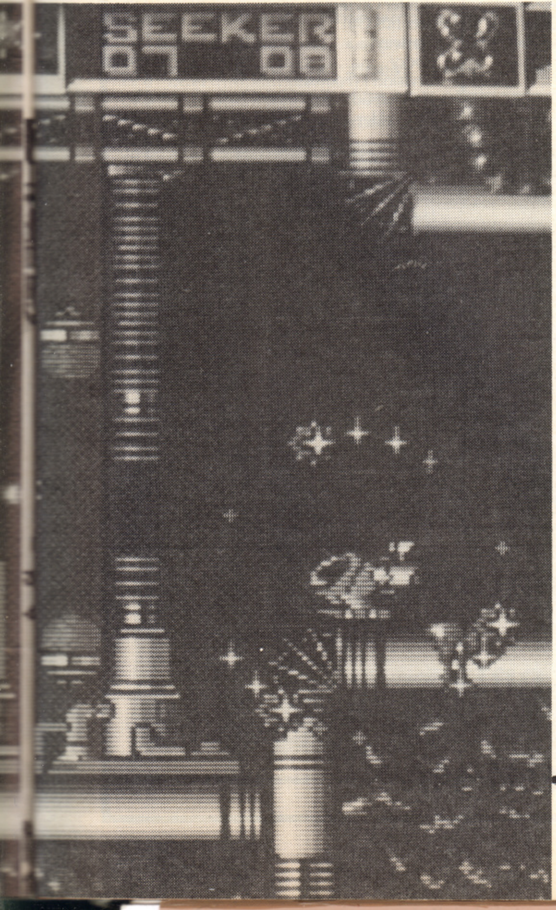


Collect enough booty to receive an extra ship on completion of the level. It's not easy, but then no-one said it would be.

shields are available, and their use is dictated by the opposition present on each screen. Although in limited supply, the current weapon's stock is increased by one unit on collection of ammo pods which have been left lying around the underground caverns.



Further weapons may also be collected in the same way, and remain in use until the ship's demise. Add ons include a rear-firing blaster and up to three swirling orbitals, which remove pirate ships and alien growths on contact, and also act as partial shielding against enemy bullets.

Valuable items float to the ground whenever pirate ships are destroyed and are gathered and stored aboard the Cybernoid. At the end of each level, a Federation depot appears, whereupon the ship lands and a bonus is awarded. If enough booty has been recovered, another Cybernoid ship is added to the stock.

Cybernoid is an unusual shoot 'em up, with the different elements of mindless blasting, precision flying and strategic use of weapons combine to make it an entertaining and challenging game.

The first three levels should yield fairly quickly, but the final level is a massive 80 screens long, so completing the mission seems a distant prospect. There's more than enough game here, but it would have benefited from a higher difficulty level and either a save game option or a password entry system; repeatedly playing through the earlier screens does prove tiresome after a while.

ST

ST Cybernoid is a worthy opponent to its Commodore incarnation – save for one major fault: the sound. Play is constantly accompanied by a horrendous hissing sound coinciding with the activation of the ship's thrusters, and firing the blasters results in a pathetic 'poing'. After a few minutes, this combination begins to grate on the nerves and the volume is turned down, or the 'sound effects' option set to 'OFF'; either way the game continues in silence, reducing the enjoyment gleaned from the experience. This may sound picky, but I would warn prospective purchasers to take a look (and listen) before condemning any funds.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	55%
SOUND	28%
PLAYABILITY	60%
VALUE	50%

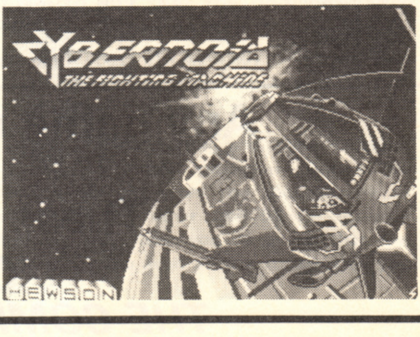
OVERALL 59%

A

Not really the stuff of 16-bits, Hewson has nevertheless made the best of a bad job: the graphics are smart, if a little repetitive, and on occasions there are more than too many sprites whizzing around the screen, providing a tremendous feeling of action and inducing not a small amount of panic. The array of sampled sound effects are well suited to their respective sources, and add to the whole ambience of the game.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	55%
SOUND	68%
PLAYABILITY	68%
VALUE	58%

OVERALL 65%



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Space Racer

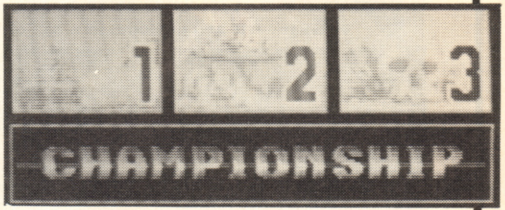
So it's another bike game. Or is it? Mix Super Hang-On with a bit of Mad Max and Death Race 2000 and you've got Space Racer from Loriciels. Graham Taylor is on the inside track...

The plot to **Space Racer** is hardly the stuff to inspire play... "You, bravest of the brave (etc)... fight to the death... zoom around the track... anything goes... only one will cross the finishing track... alive!" Get the picture?

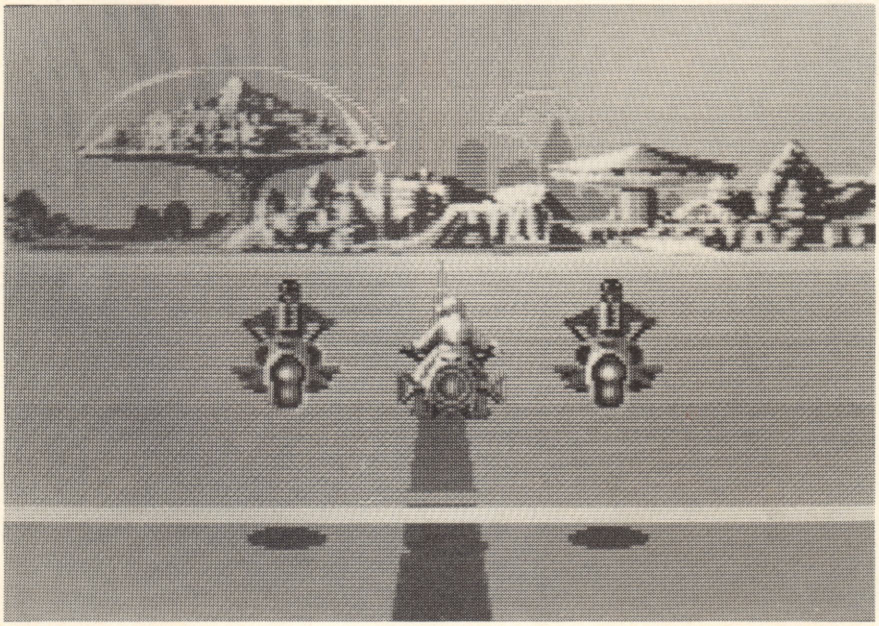
Now all this, plus the fact that at the beginning of each race the little man who sits on your jetbike waves at you and says 'Hello' in a badly sampled rather wimpish voice, did not fill me with confidence. How wrong I was.

Space Race is certainly, for my money, Loriciel's finest hour. The French software house has often produced graphically excellent games but somehow gameplay has tended to let down the proceedings. With **Space Racer** they've got it right.

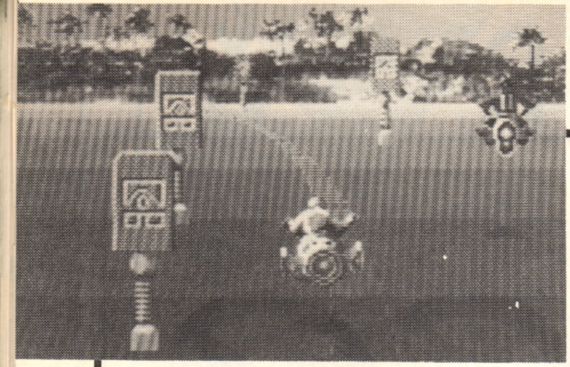
Never mind the plot. There are three levels, which may be played individually for practice or together as a 'Championship'. Through extensive play I have to say that the only difference between levels seems to be graphics. Level Three isn't actually more difficult than Level One – which is not to say that either is easy...



▲ Select a track before you race. You can admire the hi-tech tower blocks found on Level One, peruse the Bespin-like bubble cities adorning the second level or be taken aback by the scenic splendour of Level Three's fossilised skulls.



◀ The starting grid. There's a three second countdown before the race, which just gives you enough time to check out the other two bikers currently flanking you. Keep you finger on that fire button . . . you need all the acceleration you can get.



Imagine **Super Hang-On** except that the 'track' you follow is simply a line – like the centre of a roadway. Your jetbike has to follow closely and must not be either too high or low relative to it otherwise you lose speed. This sounds bizarre but surprisingly makes quite a lot of intuitive sense when you are actually playing – you get a feel for how to use relative height as a way of slowing on a turn, ie: you pull the bike *down* as well as steering. Get your bike into the right position, hold down the fire button and you absolutely bomb around the track. Well, almost...

There are two major obstacles in **Space Racer**. The first is the series of sign posts, sticks, rods and poles with little bits on them that might be trees (were this not the futuristic world of 2132). The explosions are pretty convincing as is the dramatic tumble from the bike. It's an effect you witness a lot to begin with... take the corners and hit a passing billboard at a slower speed and you get stopped for a couple of seconds and your little man shakes his fist at the offending articles – a nice touch.

The second obstacle is all the other drivers. This is where the fun and indeed the point of the game begins. The time you take to complete a track isn't the point – your screen display doesn't even give you a timing rating. The other bikes are the point – you have to get rid of them, by any means you can. This is what makes **Space Racer** – the best way of dealing with the opposition is to barge them on corners and push them off the track, onto a passing tree.

The barging back and forth gets astoundingly vicious as both you and the opposition try to inflict ever more violent shoves on each other without losing control.

There are a couple of other features worth mentioning. You can fire at the guy in front but you get one bullet every several hundred points so it doesn't amount to much. Bouncing blue balls appear once in a while and these boost your energy levels which depletes every time you hit something. Occasionally frantic bleeping signals a less welcome addition to the track – a mine – well worth avoiding I'd say.

ST

The graphics are good, nicely detailed as we've come to expect from French software houses. Sound is less impressive though, and the only good sample is the throttle up at the beginning of the race and the loading soundtrack. The rest is that vague white noise that passes for engine noises in most racing games. Let's be generous and call it adequate. There are a few other niggles – the cockpit display is odd in what it doesn't tell you. I mean, having to press a key to find out how much track is left – whilst playing! Why couldn't it just be displayed continuously? And, despite everything, I wouldn't mind having a timer for levels, even if it isn't the main point of the game. Put all aside though, Space Racer is a very addictive game – I hope it doesn't just get lost in the growing tide of 16-bit software.

PRICE:	**£19.99**
RELEASE DATE:	**Out Now**
GRAPHICS	71%
SOUND	56%
PLAYABILITY	78%
VALUE	68%

OVERALL 75%

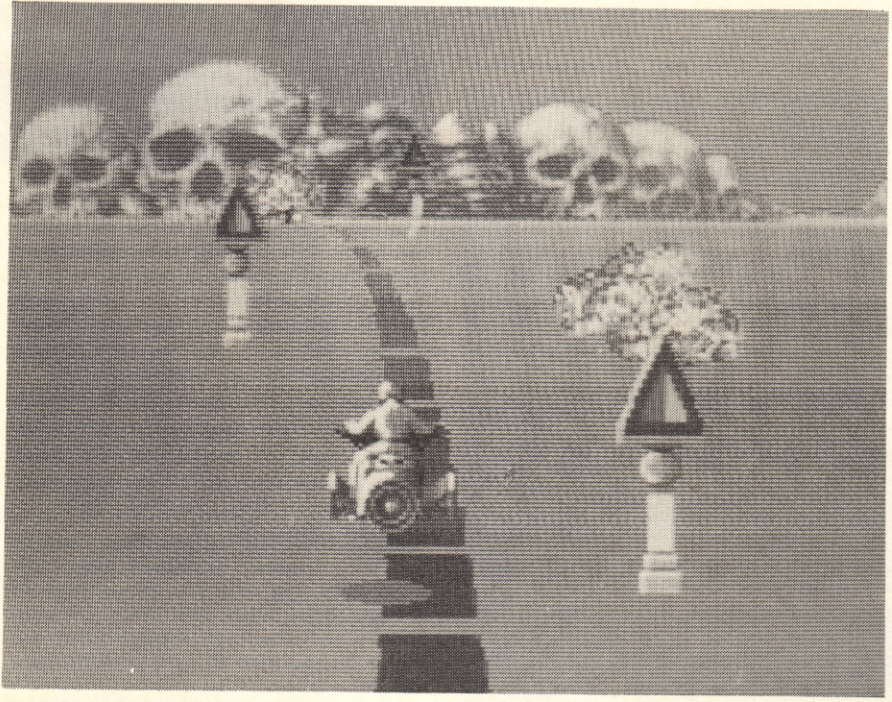
A

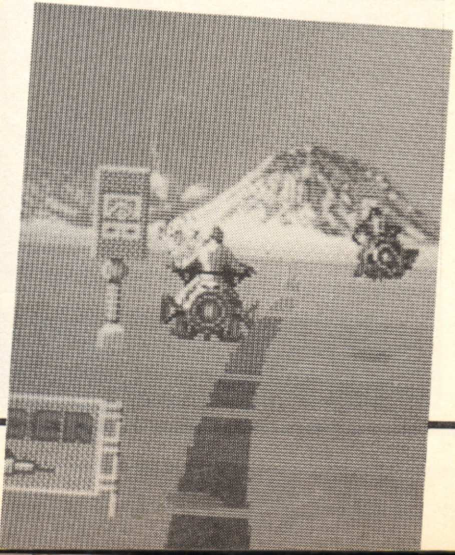
The Amiga version is exactly the same as the ST version reviewed here, though the sound, particularly the samples, is clearer.

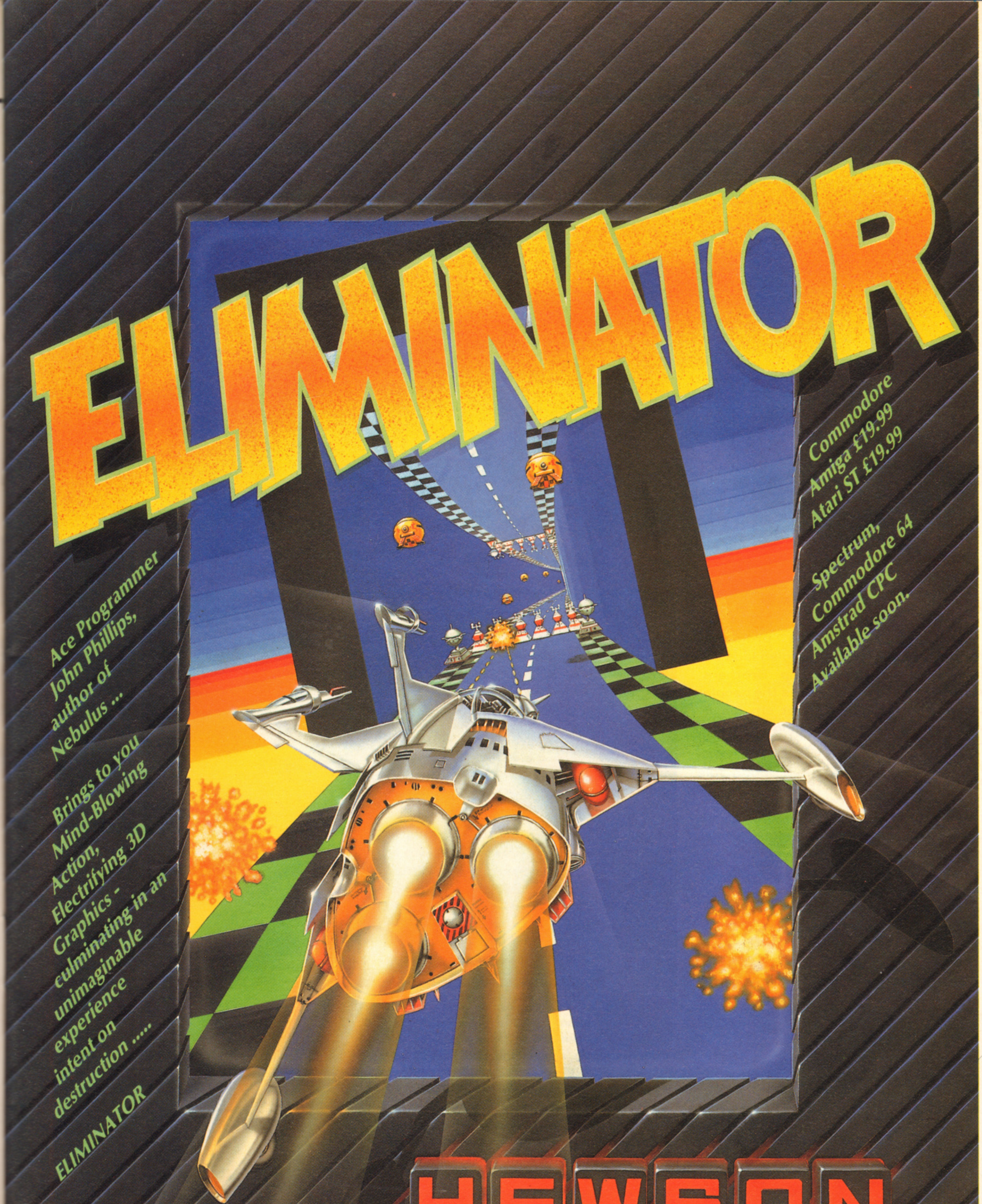
PRICE:	**£19.99**
RELEASE DATE:	**Out Now**
GRAPHICS	66%
SOUND	52%
PLAYABILITY	78%
VALUE	68%

OVERALL 75%

As you approach another treacherous hairpin bend, an opponent clips one of the signposts and explodes in a ball of flame. Pray you don't go the same way . . .



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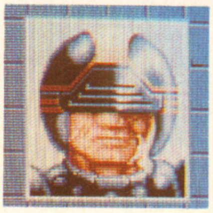
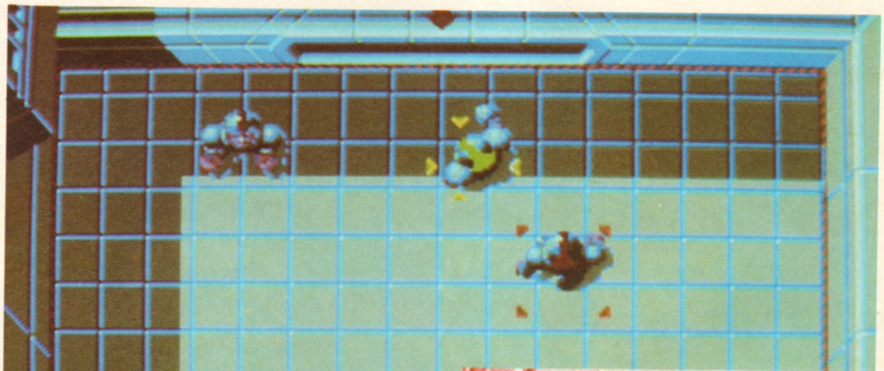


The Bitmap Brothers have put their weird-looking heads together with Image Works and come up with a sport for the future with a novel twist... gratuitous violence. Gary Whitta gives 110 percent and ends up over the moon.

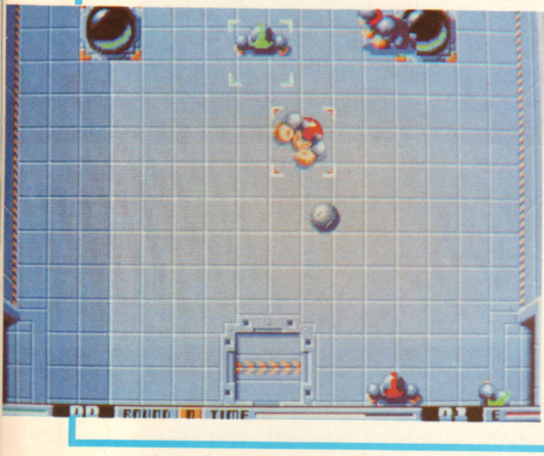
One of the first games to really cause a stir on the 16-bit machines was Melbourne House's **Xenon**. The programmers, three slightly outlandish lads by the name of the Bitmap Brothers sprung to fame overnight as the people behind one of the best shoot 'em ups of last year. Since then, nothing has been heard of them, until now.

Speedball is a deadly sport which takes place in the distant future. The rules are simple: two teams of five players face each other in the Speed Dome, a large metallic indoor arena with a goal zone at each end, and the object is to score as many goals as possible by throwing the ball, a heavy steel sphere about the size of a large grapefruit, into the opposing team's goal zone.

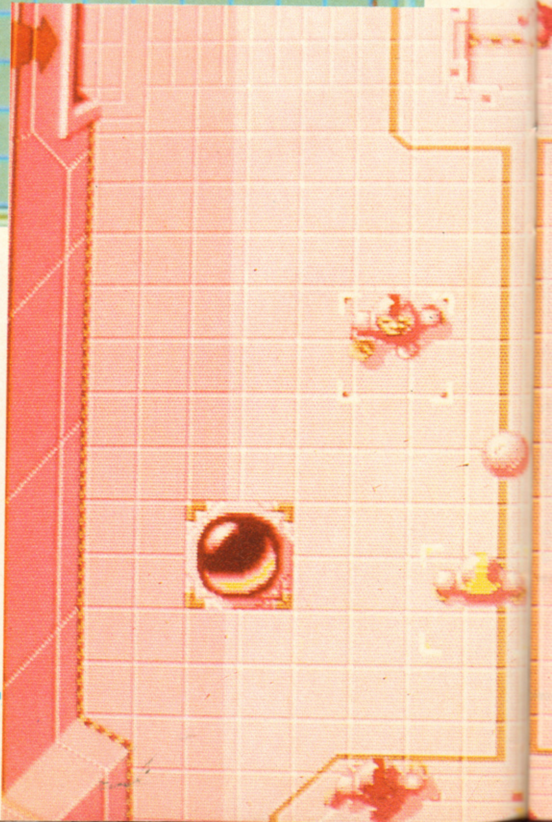
At the outset of the game, a menu screen is displayed, featuring a variety



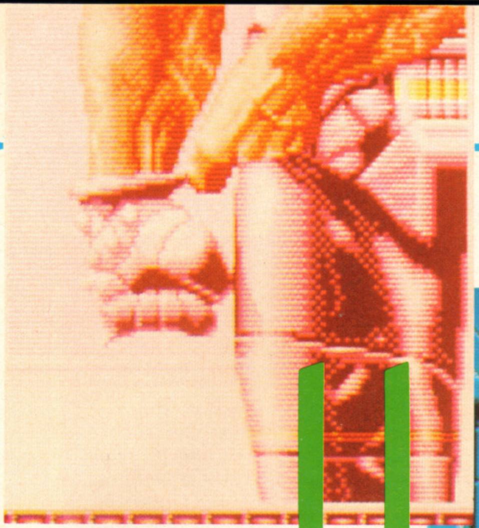
The PC version. If Red's goalie doesn't pull his finger out pretty sharpish, the Green striker is going to knock the ball in, no trouble, and pull the score back to 3-1.

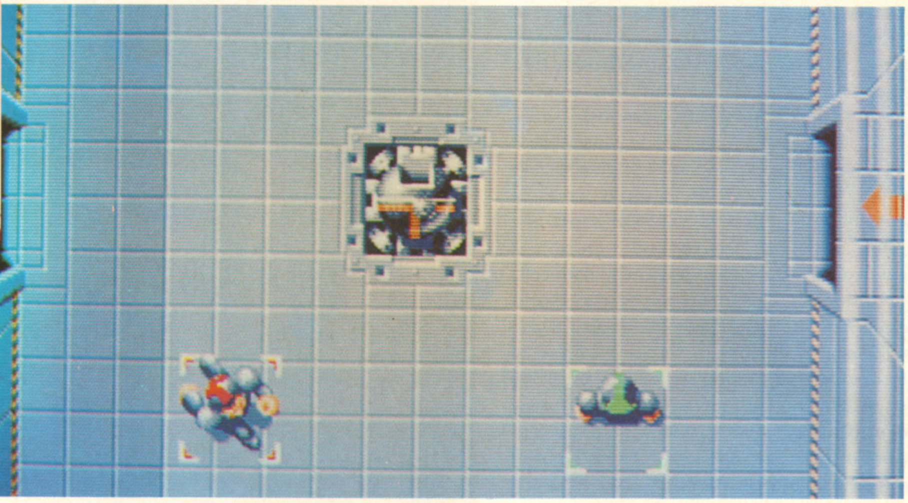


One of Red's strikers leaps desperately to pluck the high-flying ball out of the air, but he's mistimed the jump and the ball has flown straight past as a result. Butterfingers!

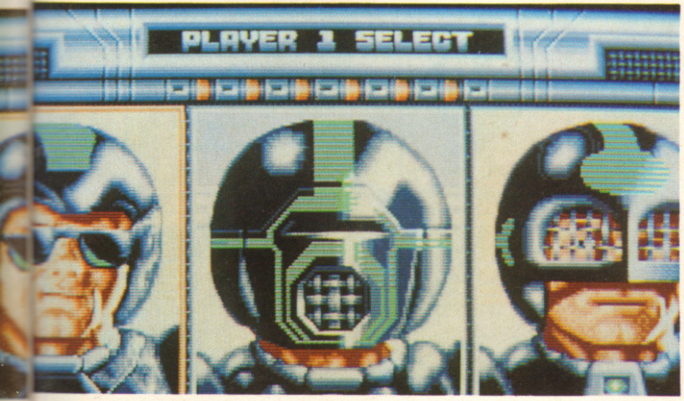


The Amiga version: note the more detailed pitch markings. It also features enhanced music and sampled crowd cheers when a goal is scored!

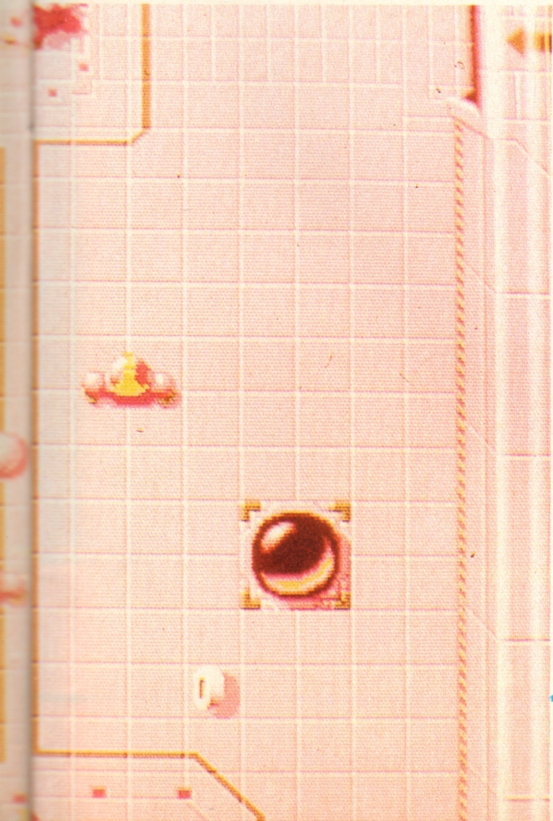




The mechanical ball launcher that spits out the ball at the start of play. Shades of Xenon here as the doorway in the floor opens up before the launcher rises up out of the floor, throws out the ball and sinks back silently, doors closing behind it. The sequence features lovely animation on the gears and pistons underneath.



Could this motley trio be the Bitmap Brothers? Well, close but not exactly. They are in fact the captains of the three teams you can choose to represent. Take a good long look at those statistics... they could mean the difference between victory and defeat.



of game options. There are two types of one player game against droid opponents, plus a two player head to head face-off. An option to load and save games is also included. If a two player tournament is selected, the number of weeks over which it will be played – from 10 to a 100 – is also chosen. In the final pre-match screen, the human contestants choose the teams that they wish to represent from a group of three. When this is done, the game proper can begin.

The Speed Dome is rectangular in shape and about three (scrolling) screens long. The teams are split into three areas; two attacking, two defending and one goalie. When the game begins, the four attacking players 'face off' in the centre of the arena as a mechanical ball launcher rises out of a hatchway and shoots the ball in a random direction. To gain possession of the ball, the player has only to run over it (only one on-screen player can be controlled at a time). An arrow flashes to indicate who has the ball, and he can then be moved exactly as before. Tapping the fire button causes your player to throw the ball, while pressing and holding it results in a high lob (useful for getting the ball past defenders). Since the goal zone is a thin slot about five feet high, lobbing the ball in its general direction won't result in a goal; the ball will simply bounce off the wall. Only waist high shots, executed by a quick jab of the fire button will result in an on-target shot.

POWER-UP!

The random lettered tokens that appear on the floor can be amazingly useful if implemented correctly. Here's a brief run-down of what they do...

D	Decreases your opponent's stamina.
S	Increases your own stamina.
P	Protects you from being tackled.
G	Gives you the ball automatically.
J	Reverses the joystick controls for ten seconds.
M	Launches an eight-way mine, nobbling players who get in the way.
E	Similar to 'M' but only fires one mine.
F	Freezes your opponent's players for ten seconds.
?	Slow down your opponent's players.

So far you may have been led to believe that **Speedball** isn't a dangerous sport at all, but you'd be gravely mistaken. Fouling features prominently in the game, and is an essential tactic. There two basic methods. Hitting the fire button while running launches your player into a violent sliding tackle that should release the ball. Far more experienced pugilists and two opposing players meeting normally results in a heated fist fight. Again the fire button causes your player to land a doughboy onto the face of his opponent. One punch is enough to put a player out of action for a few seconds (remember, part of a Speedballer's armour consists of a deadly spiked metal gauntlet!).

In addition to the dirty game tactics, the opportunity to nobble your opponents even further is provided by the novel 'power-up' weapons system. From time to time, floor tiles in the arena release round spinning tokens. Collect these, and they can be traded in at the intervals for extra features and advantages in the next game.

Ladies and gentlemen, meet the boys behind the brilliance.... From left to right: Stephen Kelly (programmer of the ST version), Eric Matthews (the Bitmap's 'front man', product designer and occasional graphics artist), and Michael Montgomery (programmer of the Amiga and PC versions).

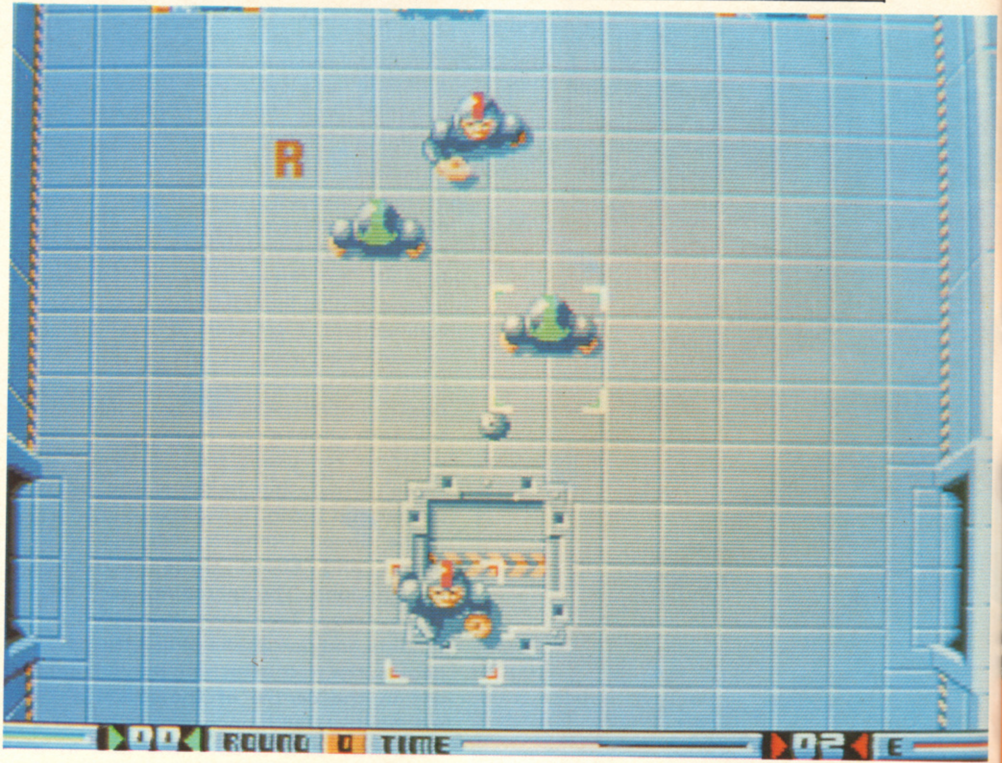
A There are a few graphic improvements, such as markings on the pitch, and the music's clearer. Accompanying the action are some superb sampled clinks and clangs as the ball is thrown around, plus cheers and even a car horn sound at the end of a round! Speedball on the Amiga plays identically to the brilliant ST version, and comes just as highly recommended.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	90%
PLAYABILITY	94%
VALUE	84%
OVERALL	90%

PC Not only have the boys excelled themselves on the ST and Amiga, they've also delivered the goods for discerning PC games players. As you can see, Speedball is looking pretty damn fine.

ST Speedball represents the state of the art of sports simulations on the ST. Although it's not strictly a simulation (simply because the sport doesn't exist) it's quite a lot like a futuristic interpretation of basketball, and, it actually 'feels' realistic. The graphics help to convey the futuristic atmosphere, and the bas-relief graphics ranks as some of the best to date, even surpassing Xenon. The sound is of a similarly high quality and includes a variety of wonderfully metallic in-game effects and several pieces of music. Speedball is incredible fun. Never in the field of games reviewing has such an excellent game been played by so many for so long. It's one of the most enjoyable games to appear on the ST in a very long time, and as such it should feature highly on your shopping list. A must buy.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	84%
PLAYABILITY	94%
VALUE	87%
OVERALL	90%



The two door-sized holes positioned on opposing walls in the centre of the game zone have rather a useful purpose. Throwing the ball into one of them will result in it being shot out of the other, at exactly the same angle and speed as it entered. Extremely useful for getting past defenders and passing the ball to players on the other side of the arena.

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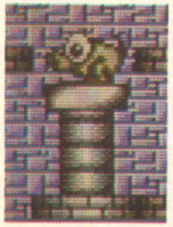
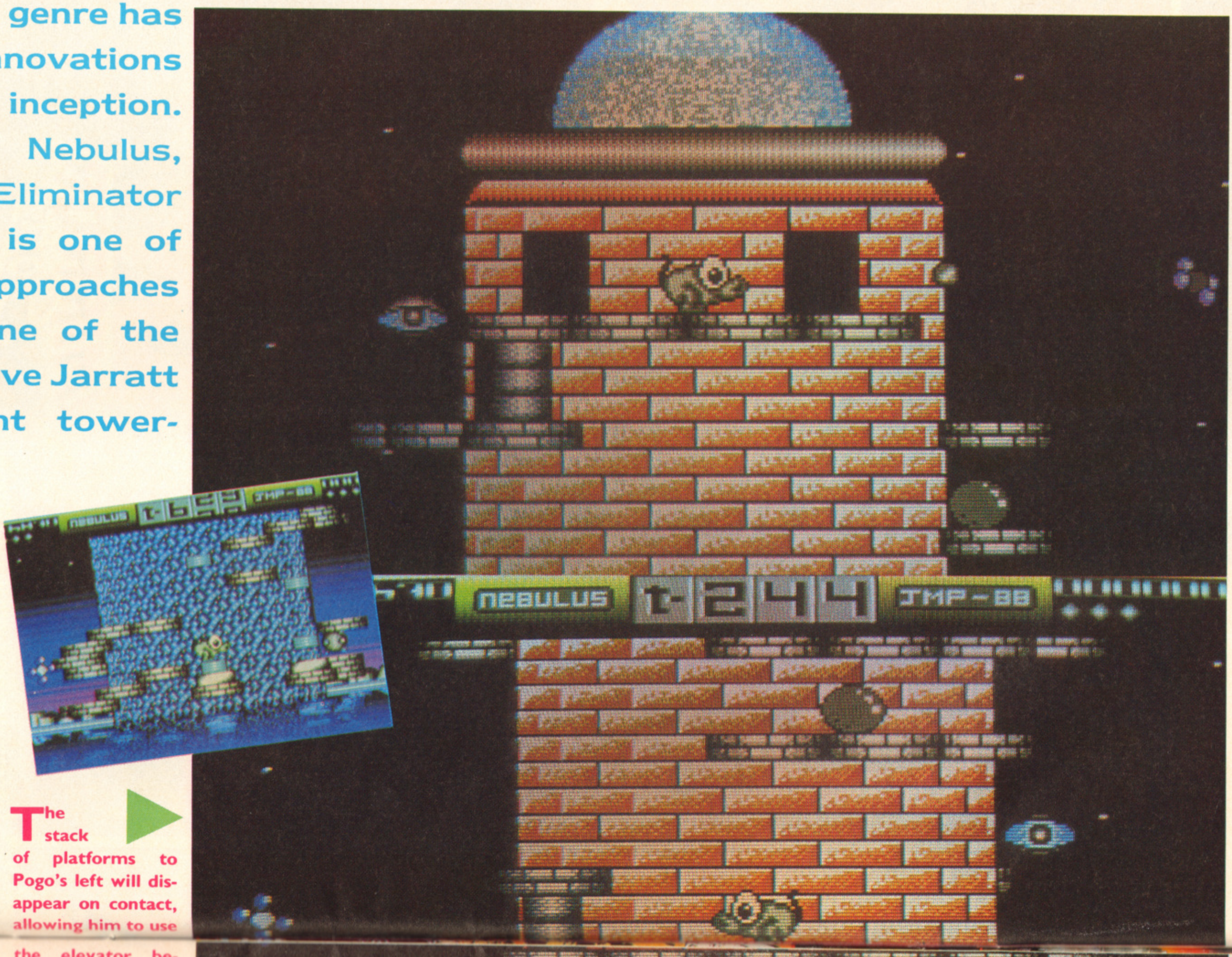
Nebulus



The platform genre has seen few innovations since its inception. Hewson's Nebulus, written by Eliminator author John Phillips, is one of the most original approaches yet seen. It's also one of the most playable... as Steve Jarratt found when he went tower-toppling.

Pogo is a small creature from Destructo Inc who has been charged with the task of demolishing a series of lighthouses which have been built out at sea without planning permission. His job is accomplished by ascending each cylindrical construction using the platforms and elevators located on the outside of the towers. This precarious assignment is made more difficult by the strange beings which have set up in residence among the catwalks and ledges. Bouncing balls, rotating objects and blinking eyes all contribute towards Pogo's downfall by sending the green one tumbling to a lower platform

The stack of platforms to Pogo's left will disappear on contact, allowing him to use the elevator be-



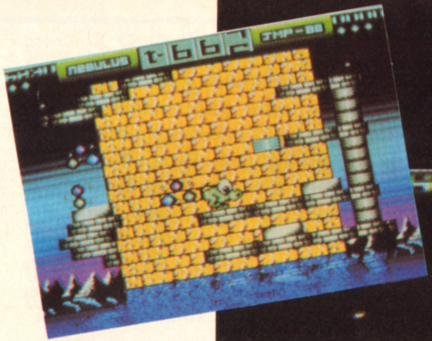
wards Pogo's downfall by sending the green one tumbling to a lower platform – or more frequently, to an icy dip in the water below.

Pogo carries a single-shot snowball blaster with which to destroy or stun the aggressors, although most are impervious to his weapon and must be avoided by agility rather than force. His snowballs are also used to destroy blocks which otherwise bar the path of an elevator.

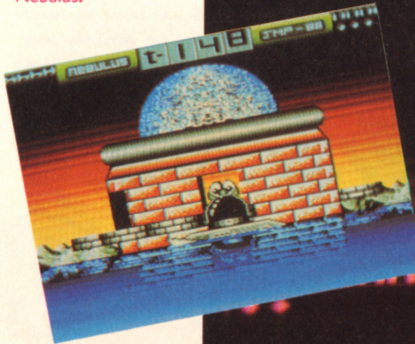
The route to the top of each building is described by careful negotiation of the available platforms, and is often far from obvious. Pogo also has to contend with disappearing ledges and gaps, over which he can jump, and greasy stairways which can only be climbed in one go; stopping half-way sees him slither back down to the bottom again.

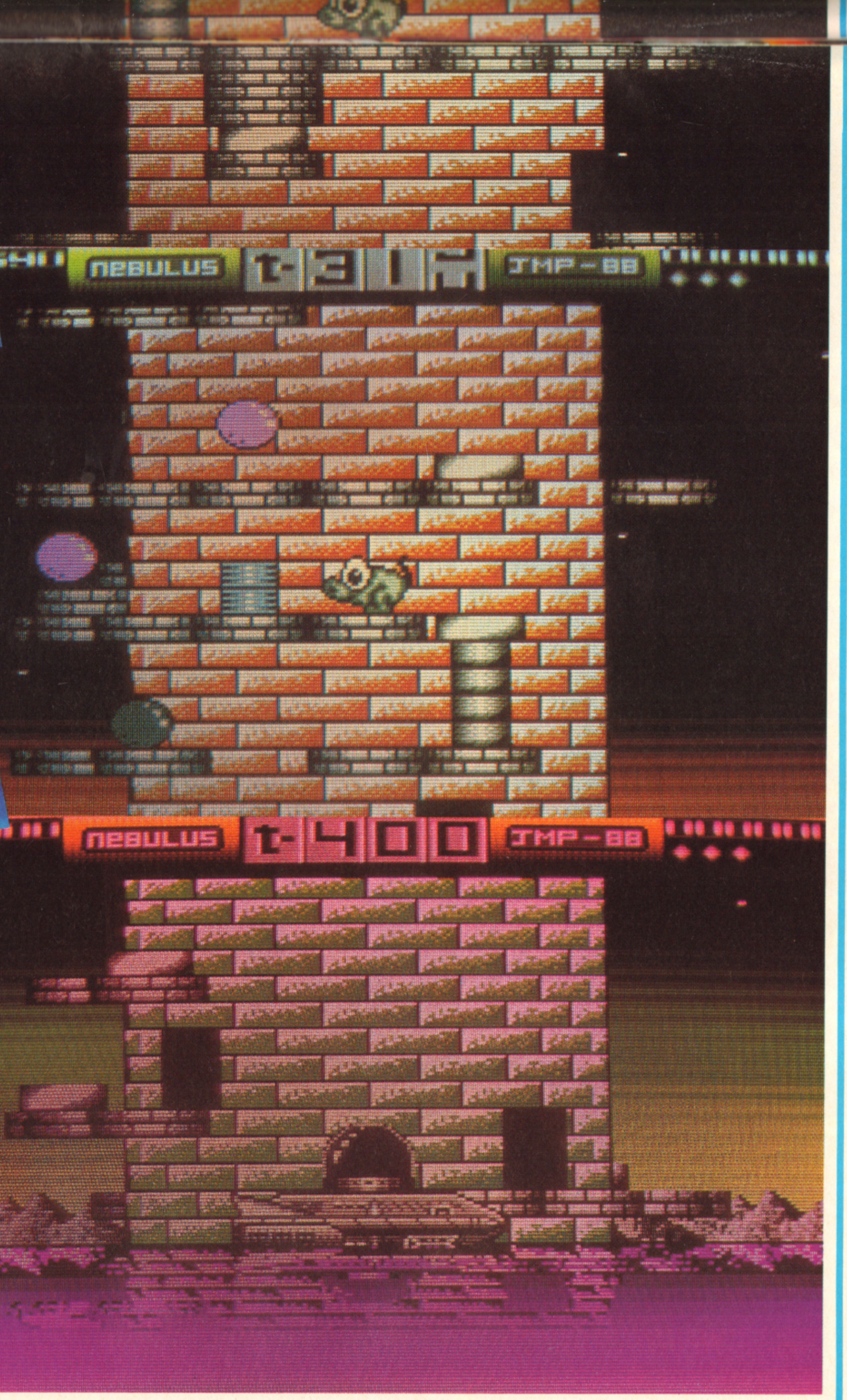
The platform aspect doesn't sound particularly exciting, but **Nebulus'** appeal and originality lies in the way in which the action is executed. Pogo remains static in the centre of the screen while the towers revolve around him – smoothly, and very realistically indeed. The effect is quite extraordinary at first, and the strategy needed to cope with this unusual

allowing him to use the elevator beneath.

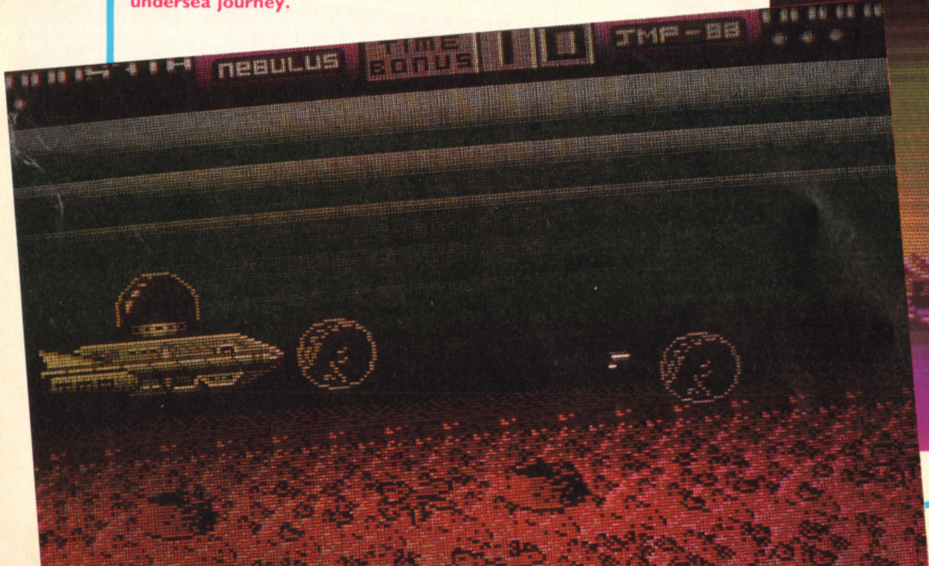


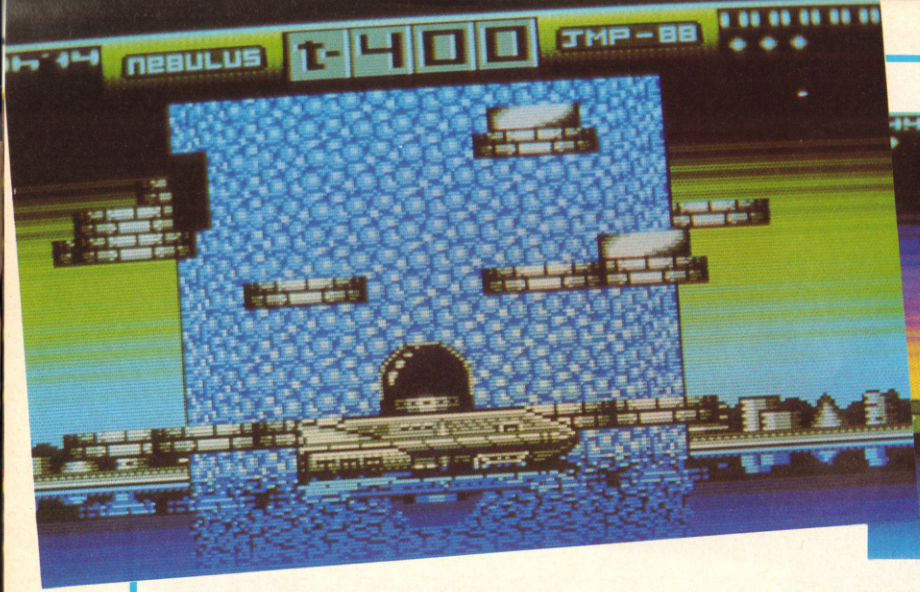
One of the more difficult towers to negotiate in John Phillips' Nebulus.

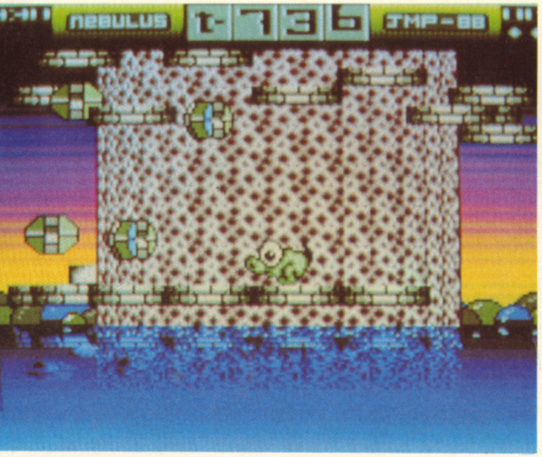




Having reached the top of the construction, bonus points are awarded based on your performance. The tower then falls to sea level (right) allowing Pogo to slip into his sub and embark on an undersea journey.







style of play requires the player to start thinking in three dimensions, remembering the path already taken.

Once a tower is felled, Pogo rejoins his submarine, the JMP1, in order to reach the base of the next lighthouse. The intervening journey is set against a four-layer parallax scrolling seabed and spiced up by some sub-aquatic fishing. Fish are encapsulated within the JMP's missiles and are collected on contact with the submarine for an extra time bonus on the next demolition job. There are 16, increasingly treacherous towers to be demolished, split into two, eight-tower missions, selected separately from the title screen.

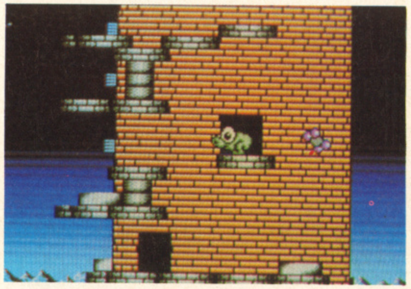
Nebulus regularly requires pixel-perfect jumps and split-second timing; later levels have been designed with what can only be described as a vicious streak. As such, it can be incredibly frustrating, and yet amazingly rewarding at the same time. There is no questioning the quality of the game; but if you suffer from a threadbare patience, or prefer your action a little less pre-destined, **Nebulus** may not represent such a great investment. Everyone else should go and buy it ASAP.

▲ Pogo arrives at the second tower, after a successful underwater fishing trip.

▲ The aliens and scenery gets weirder and weirder, and the skyline prettier on later levels.

JOHN PHILLIPS UPDATE

As revealed in The One last month, John Phillips is currently working on a new project, tentatively billed as the sequel to **Nebulus**. Previously set over a revolving sphere, John's fears have been fulfilled: even the ST couldn't cope with this complex task. However, undaunted, John has continued on another tack, based around his original idea for **Nebulus**. The action now follows the path of a robot negotiating a cylinder which lies horizontally across the screen, and revolves in accordance with the robot's movements. This all takes place within a hollow tube, the inner wall of which can be seen behind the first tube, revolving and scrolling in parallax to the first. Both surfaces have a chequerboard pattern and are graded, using around 100 colours on-screen! Expect to see some screen-shots soon.



▲ Pogo sits outside a doorway which leads to the other side of the tower. The molecule-like alien to the right appears at regular intervals throughout your journey, knocking you down on contact.

ST The most striking feature (of Nebulus' many striking features) is the base of each tower. The ink-blue sea ripples effectively and reflects the action on the tower above. The beautifully graded skies and water have been accomplished with up to 60 colours on-screen, and the result – as you can see from the screen shots, or last month's demo – is gorgeous. The revolving lighthouses are similarly splendid in both their design and implementation. Only the sound effects are less than awe-inspiring, but even they are adequate, relying on some pleasant samples (most notably a sitar run-down at the end of a go) and accompanied by standard ST-style noises.

PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	86%
SOUND	70%
PLAYABILITY	90%
VALUE	82%
OVERALL	88%

A The only marked differences between ST and Amiga Nebulus are the higher number of colours on-screen and the quality of the sound effects, all of which are sampled on the Amiga, (including a strange throaty wheeze for the appearance of one alien). However, the Amiga version does run slightly faster, and is therefore a touch more responsive – an important factor – in a game as precise and demanding as this.

PRICE:	£24.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	86%
SOUND	82%
PLAYABILITY	91%
VALUE	82%
OVERALL	88%

PC While the CGA version isn't as colourful as the ST and Amiga versions, the rotating effect remains almost as impressive. Playability, on the other hand, can't be judged as we've only seen little more than a demo. Rest assured we will provide an update as soon as possible.

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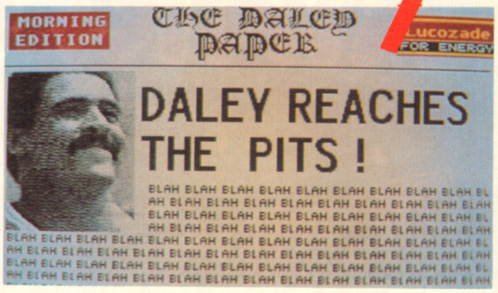
A614

Daley

Olympi

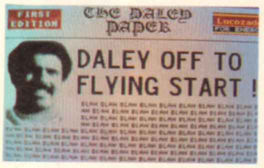
Darling Daley Thompson was hotly tipped to become the first man ever to win three Olympic Gold Medals in succession by coming tops in the Decathlon at this year's controversial Olympic Games in Seoul. But he failed – by a meagre 20 points! Gary Penn attempts to make amends by waggling away with Ocean's officially endorsed sports simulation...


MORNING EDITION

THE DALEY PAPER

Lucozade FOR ENERGY

DALEY REACHES THE PITS !


FIRST EDITION

THE DALEY PAPER

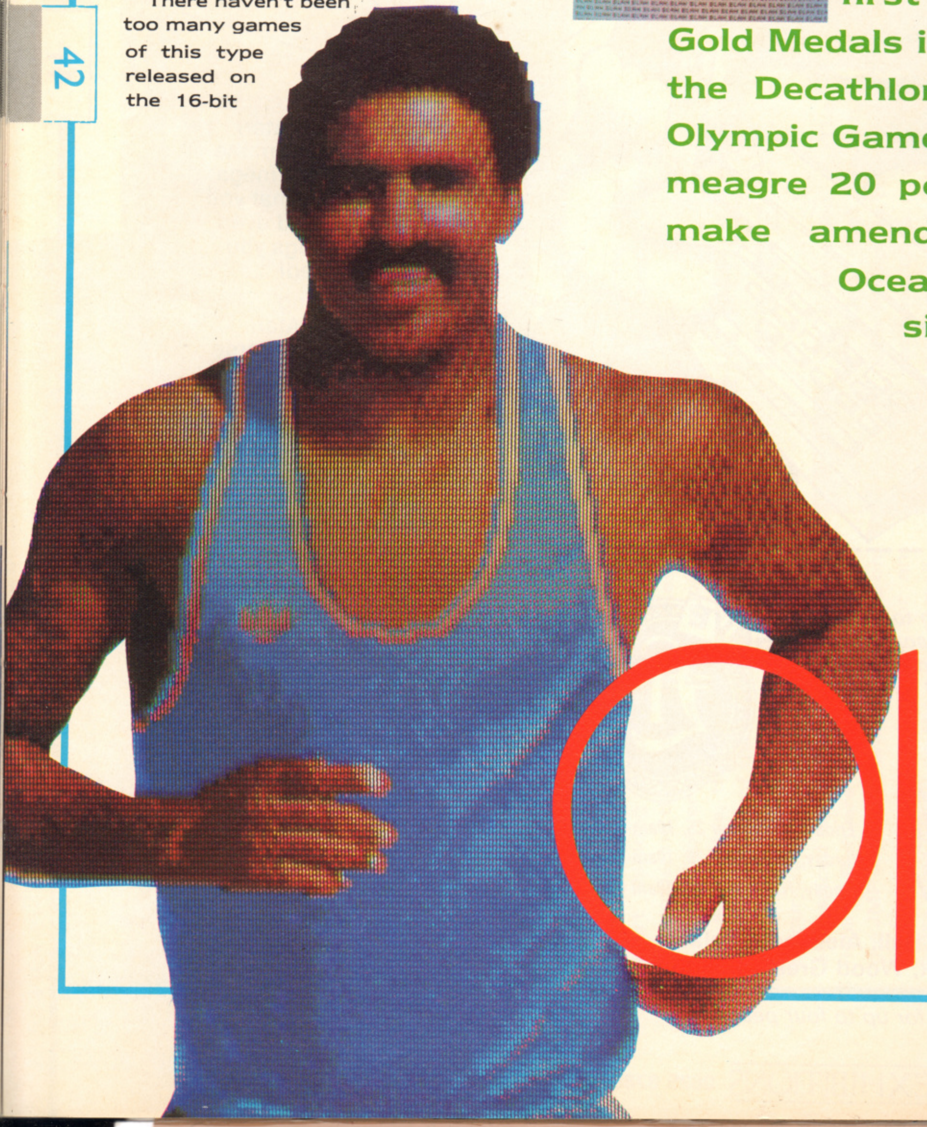
DALEY OFF TO FLYING START !

Does anyone remember an (ahem) 8-bit game released, oh, all of five years ago by Activision. A sports simulation which required you to wiggle (or 'waggle') the joystick as quickly as possible, thus causing your binary alter-ego to run, throw or jump as fast or as far as possible. Many games of a similar ilk followed, but none managed to capture **Decathlon**'s feel – including Ocean's first Daley Thompson tie-in.

It must be said that there's nothing particularly subtle or innovative about this type of simulation – it's more often than not the player with the most beef being the best. Where joystick waggling games succeed as simulations however, is by virtue of the fact that with all these frantic arm movements, you sweat and ache – a lot, just as if you really are running a cardiac arrest inducing 1500m.

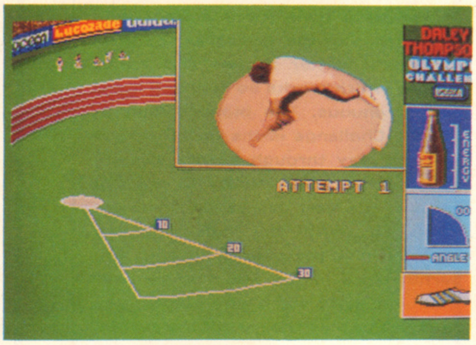
There haven't been too many games of this type released on the 16-bit machines. Whether you see this as fortunate or not depends on your desire to gratuitously exert yourslelf in this fashion.

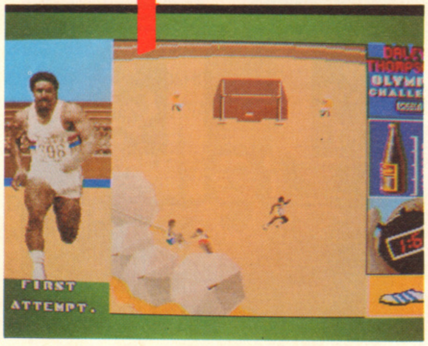
Daley Thompson's Olympic Challenge is split into two sections – training and the decathlon itself, and digitised images of Daley feature heavily throughout. The objective is very straightforward: accumulate as many points as possible in each of the ten joystick-waggling events and attempt to knock the world record into a cocked hat. Ocean have taken a leaf or ten out of Daley's book where points are



Thompson's

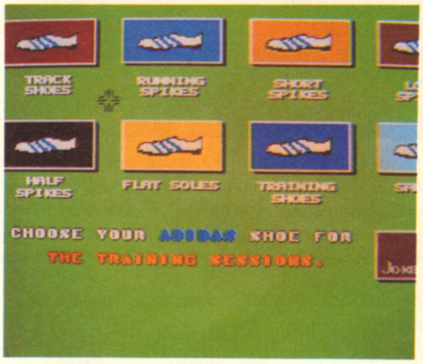
Long spikes aid the digitised Daley's performance in the shot put. Tiny athletes train in the background, oblivious to the tightly coiled spring about to explode at the top of the screen. Speedy waggling and good timing should result in a lengthy 45 degree throw and plenty of points.


Lucozade
DALEY THOMPSON OLYMPIC CHALLEN
ATTEMPT 1
10
20
30
ENERGY
ANGLE


DALEY THOMPSO OLYMPI CHALLEN
FIRST ATTEMPT.

The fourth event in Daley's gruelling schedule is the high jump. It's one of the most difficult events, and the instructions don't help, so here's a tip: tap the fire button when Daley reaches the centre of the bar, then press it again when he's at the top to sail over. Oh and use flat shoes.

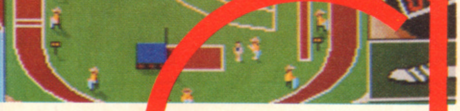
Before you can compete in an event you have to select suitable Adidas footwear. Choosing the wrong shoes can severely affect your performance – for example, not wearing the running shoes for the 100m makes the going like wading through treacle...

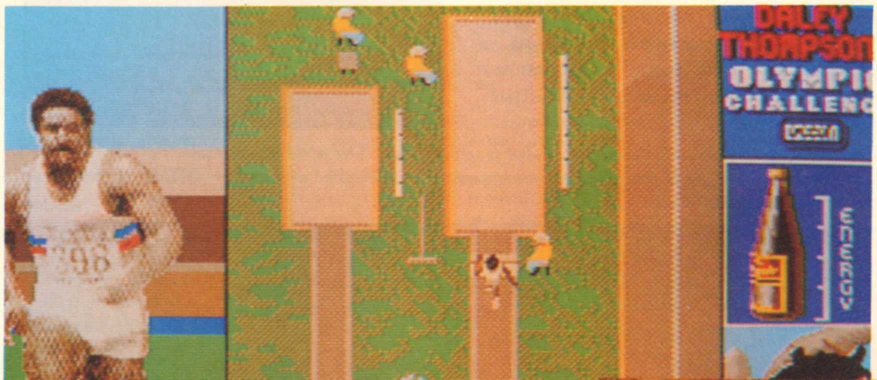

TRACK SHOES
RUNNING SPIKES
SHORT SPIKES
HALF SPIKES
FLAT SOLES
TRAINING SHOES

CHOOSE YOUR ADIDAS SHOE FOR THE TRAINING SESSIONS.

Waggle for all your worth on the run-up for the Long Jump, then hit the button before you cross the board to send a digitised Daley (left) sailing through the air. Cute atmospheric touches include a cameraman beside the pit who follows Daley's movements with his camera, athletes running past, and a guy to rake the sand after a jump.

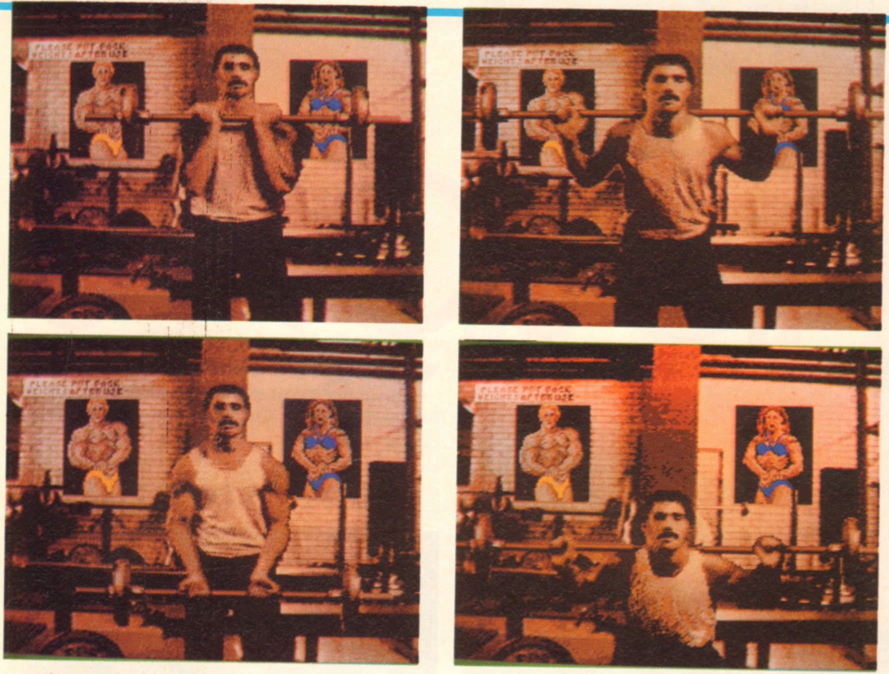
The 400m and 1500m are all depicted as below, and both require plenty of waggling and little else. Thankfully you don't have to waggle like mad all the way through the 1500m – slower movements suffice once your power is built up. It's the 400m which is the arm killer, so it's steroids... erm, Lucozade at the ready...


DALEY THOMPSO OLYMPI CHALLEN
ENERGY


DALEY THOMPSON OLYMPIC CHALLENG
ENERGY
TTEMPT: 1

DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE
LONG J

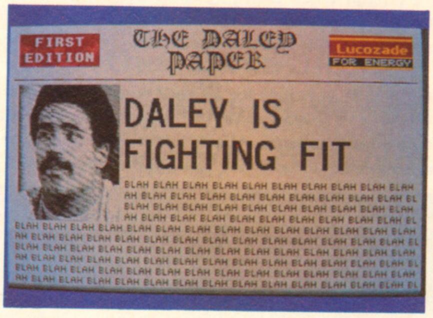
ic Challenge.



The training session takes place in the gymnasium, and comprises two types of adrenalin pumping. Both exercises involve, surprise surprise, plenty of waggling as you attempt to fill a bottle of Lucozade by performing sufficient lifts. Fill a bottle and you're awarded a can of Lucozade, which can then be used to boost Daley's energy before an event and make the process of waggling a little less demanding.

concerned, and all scoring is based on the 'real thing'.

Apart from the software the package contains a wall chart (which includes a history of the Decathlon, facts and figures about Daley Thompson – did you know he was married with one daughter? – and his personal bests) plus an audio cassette featuring a remix of the title tune, produced by Ocean's in-house musician Jonathan Dunn.



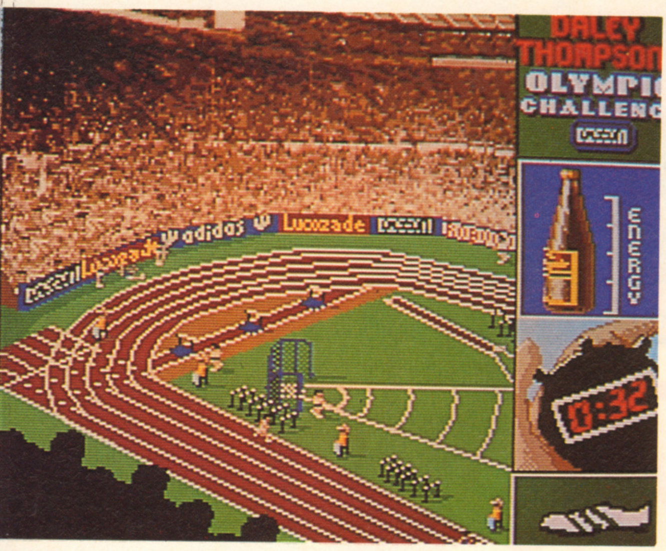
FIRST EDITION

THE DALEY PAPER

Lucozade FOR ENERGY

DALEY IS FIGHTING FIT

Daley pounds down the cinder track in 100m. The level of Lucozade in the bottle to the right of the track screen represents your speed of waggle – and as you can see, Daley's not doing too well.



DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE
OCEAN
400 METRES

A Maybe I expected too much but this all comes as a bit of a disappointment. It's a shame that all events rely so much on how quickly you can wiggle the joystick from side to side, so invariably there's very little skill involved. That said, timing is of the essence in some events when pressing or releasing the fire button to perform a throw or jump – the high jump in particular. Ocean should have gone for a more subtle approach, like the gameplay featured in Epyx's Winter Games and World Games which works so well and is far less strenuous. The biggest fault in Daley's Challenge is the fact that you have to play through events sequentially with no opportunity to practice some of the later events. So if you get stuck, say, with the high jump and can't seem to get over the bar, or you performance in the 100m is so poor that you don't score any points, you can't see or play the rest of the events. This also means that it's harder to become proficient at later events. The graphics aren't too bad on the whole, and although some of Daley's images look very fuzzy around the edges, most of the animation sequences work well. The smaller representations look quite crude in comparison though. Sound is used surprisingly sparingly, with only a few, adequate sampled effects, some simplistic jingles and a reasonable title tune. When it boils down to it, Daley is a fairly tired old concept dressed up in new sportswear. But it's still quite a playable concept, and as such it's worth a look.

PRICE:	**£24.95**
RELEASE DATE:	**Out Now**
GRAPHICS	**77%**
SOUND	**56%**
PLAYABILITY	**76%**
VALUE	**61%**

OVERALL 70%

ST Due to be released shortly after the Amiga version, ST Daley should be very, very similar cosmetically, and identical as far as gameplay is concerned. There's an update in the next issue.

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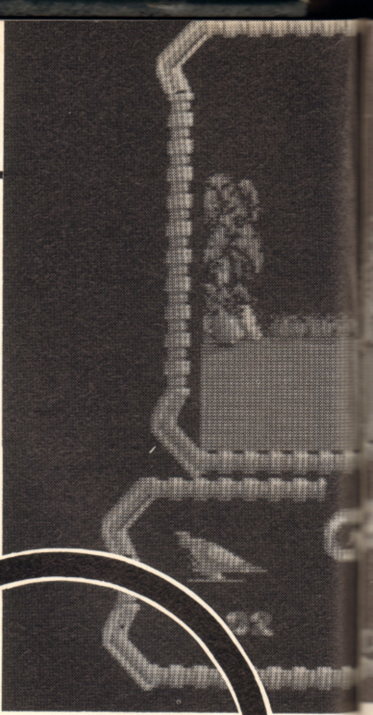
Game O



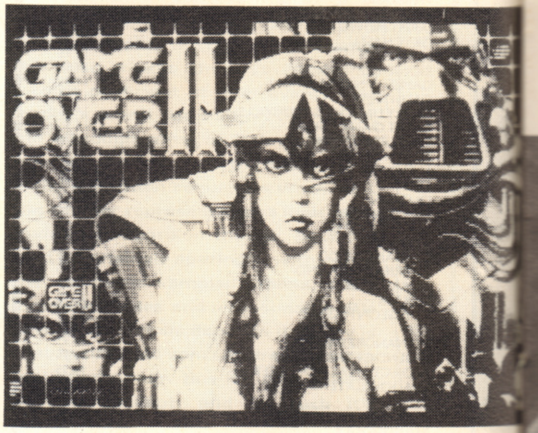
Goggle-eyed Chris Jenkins tries to ignore the naughty box artwork for Dinamic's Game Over II and concentrate instead on the software within – only to find that it's hardly the stuff to keep you glued to your joystick.

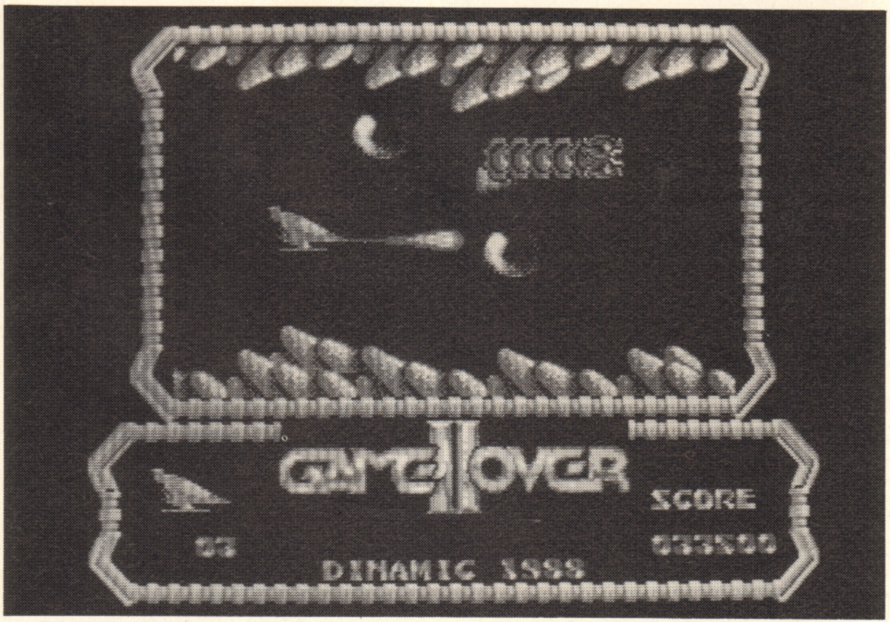
You may or may not remember, but the original **Game Over** (which never appeared on 16-bit) was one of the first titles where its artwork aroused more interest than the game itself. Its scantily-clad space princess crops up in an even more pneumatic form on the packaging of the sequel – and on the colour poster included with the package. This despite the fact that she doesn't even play a part in this game. But if you can tear your eyes away from the box, you'll soon realise as I did that the software itself is nothing to get excited about.

The plot is run-of-the-mill arcade-adventure fare. You play steel-jawed hero Major Locke, who must rescue Arkos, hero of the previous game, who has been imprisoned by the forces of the evil Queen Gremla on the prison planet of Phantis. This task comes in two parts, and to load the second, you have to get an entry code by completing the first section.

Part One is split into four sections, the first of which is a space shoot 'em up with a basic lack of imagination and ambition. The main playing area is lamentably small, and as you proceed from left to right your spacefighter is attacked by an unimpressive selection of enemy ships. The second phase sees you speeding over an unimpressive, monochromatic landscape, shooting more alien craft and things get more difficult as the volcanic landscape beneath you begins to erupt. Gas bubbles and giant snakes abound in the cavernous confines of the third stage, which can get impossibly difficult at times.

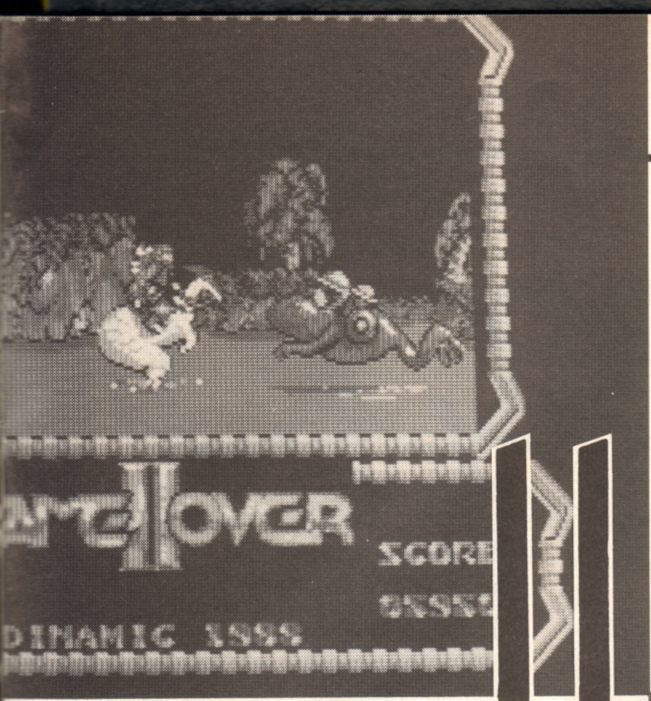
Assuming that you can fight your way through the first three phases, you land on the planet and mount an ostrich-like Adrec (which ressembles a Taun Taun from The Empire Strikes





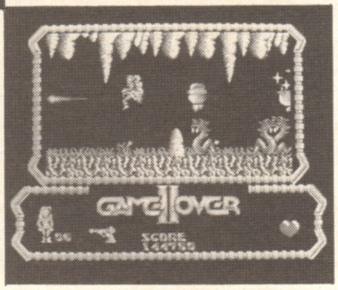
Once you've got through the four levels of the first section, it's time to explore the cavernous confines of the alien stronghold – a simplistic flick screen arcade adventure.

ver II

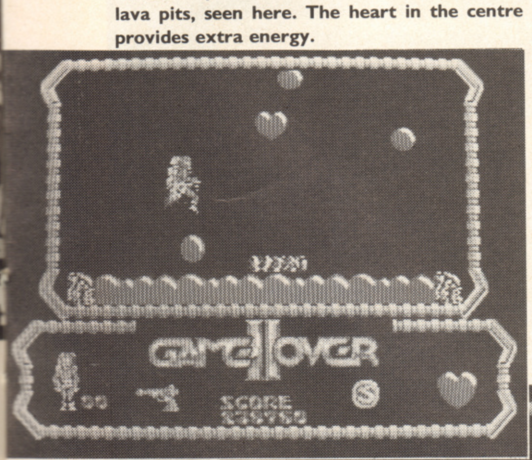


Patrolling the marshlands of the alien planet on the back of your trusty (and rather odd-looking) mount. Bizarre creatures abound and have to be killed before they kill you.

Negotiate the caverns below the planet's surface, shooting wisps, alien craft and snakes. Not only does it look and sound dreary, it plays like a brick.



Deeper into the second load you encounter all manner of odd hazards, such as sea monsters which are almost impossible to avoid or shoot, and the lava pits, seen here. The heart in the centre provides extra energy.

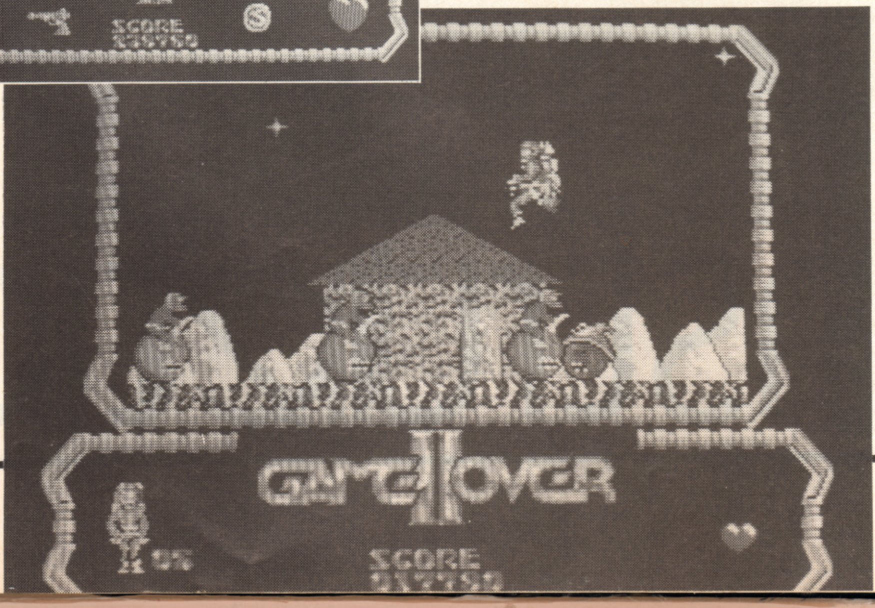


Back). This is a bit more entertaining, as you gallop across the swamp, fighting off guards mounted on giant toads and flying lizards.

Complete this section and you're given the access code for Level Two. Re-boot and enter it to embark on a journey through the six levels of a labyrinthine alien complex. The first section isn't much fun since you can't shoot the aliens; instead you have to guide a bouncing blob into them or avoid them until you find the entrance to the caverns.

Once inside, you soon find a laser weapon, and later on its booster pack. Some of the alien guards shoot at you, but most just float along hoping you'll bump into them, so it's blast and plod all the way as you make your way through the caverns. There are still problems though; you can't walk and shoot at the same time, although you can shoot while you're flying.

You have five lives in this section, and can recharge your energy by finding pulsating hearts. Some of the background scenery is nice, but the usual business of finding access keys and mapping the maze doesn't generate much excitement. On later levels you encounter sea-monsters, a (*very* short) helicopter journey through volcanic caves, and finally hordes of devils guarding the prison. But I doubt if you'll be rivetted enough to want to play this far.



ST

It's not really true to say that Game Over II is a disappointment, because I didn't really expect much from it. It seems a pity though, that time and effort should go into producing a game which makes little or no real use of the ST's advanced abilities. The graphic design is crude, while the music and snatches of speech are simply unremarkable. Games like Carrier Command, Starglider 2 and Mirrorsoft's forthcoming Interphaze, with solid 3D graphics, fast animation and complex gameplay, are becoming almost the norm for 16-bit software. Game Over II Is basically an 8-bit game which shows its origins only too clearly.

PRICE:	£19.95
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	29%
SOUND	30%
PLAYABILITY	35%
VALUE	21%

OVERALL 33%

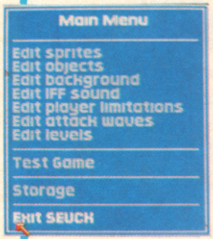
A

There are no plans for an Amiga version, which shouldn't cause Amgia owners too many sleepless nights.

PC

The PC version is available now, at the same price as the ST. Gameplay is identical, though both sound and colour are inferior, as the program does not use the EGA card.

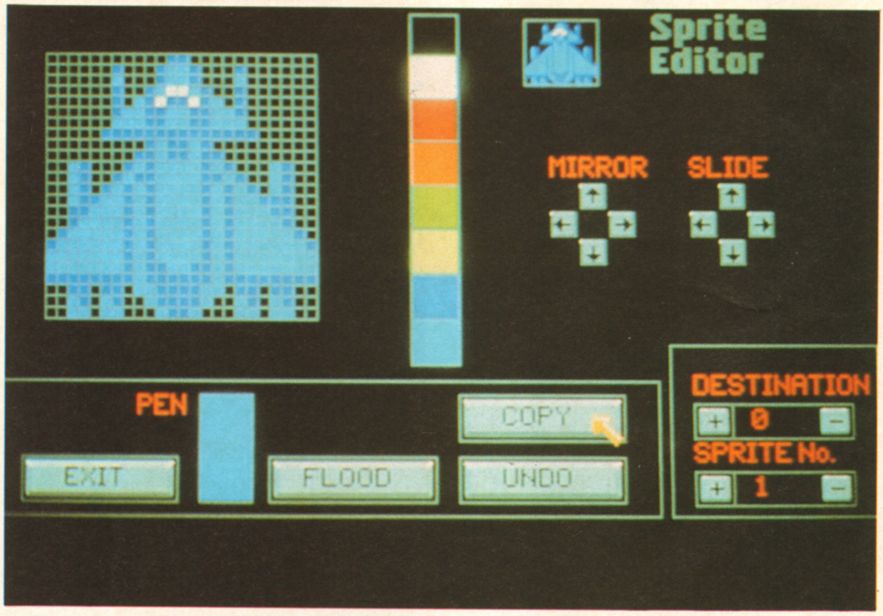
Shoot, Em


Main Menu
Edit sprites
Edit objects
Edit background
Edit IFF sound
Edit player limitations
Edit attack waves
Edit levels
Test Game
Storage
Exit SEUCK

Just as there's a backseat driver in all of us, we are all programmers at heart. We enjoy playing games and often think we can produce better, but very few of us can be bothered to actually apply ourselves and learn the intricacies of say, 68000 Assembly language. Latent talent is out there. Creative gameplay genius is screaming to be released. Now's your chance to show the world who was right all along... Now you can sit down and produce a sizzling shoot 'em up, complete with dazzling graphics and meaty sampled sounds. And all without the need to type a single instruction. Resident SEUCKer Gary Penn puts Outlaw's latest through its paces...

It was the ever-fertile minds of Chris 'Chrix' Yates and Jonathan 'Jops' Hare, better known as Sensible Software, that conceived the **Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit** – a menu and icon-driven utility, or more accurately, series of utilities which allow games players with aspirations but no programming knowledge to produce their own quality shoot 'em ups.

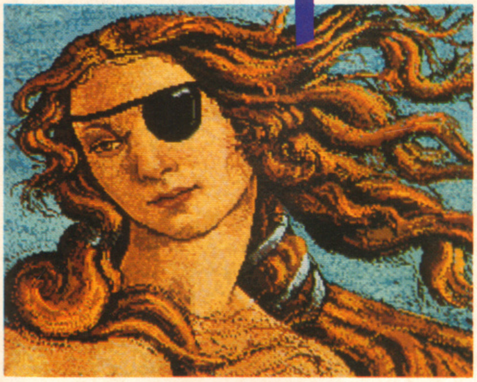
To all intent and purposes, **SEUCK** started life as **Worldmaker**, a graphics utility used by Jops on the Commodore 64. After a little cajoling, Chrix was persuaded to expand it into something


Sprite
Editor
MIRROR
SLIDE
PEN
COPY
EXIT
FLOOD
UNDO
DESTINATION
+
0
–
SPRITE No.
+
1
–

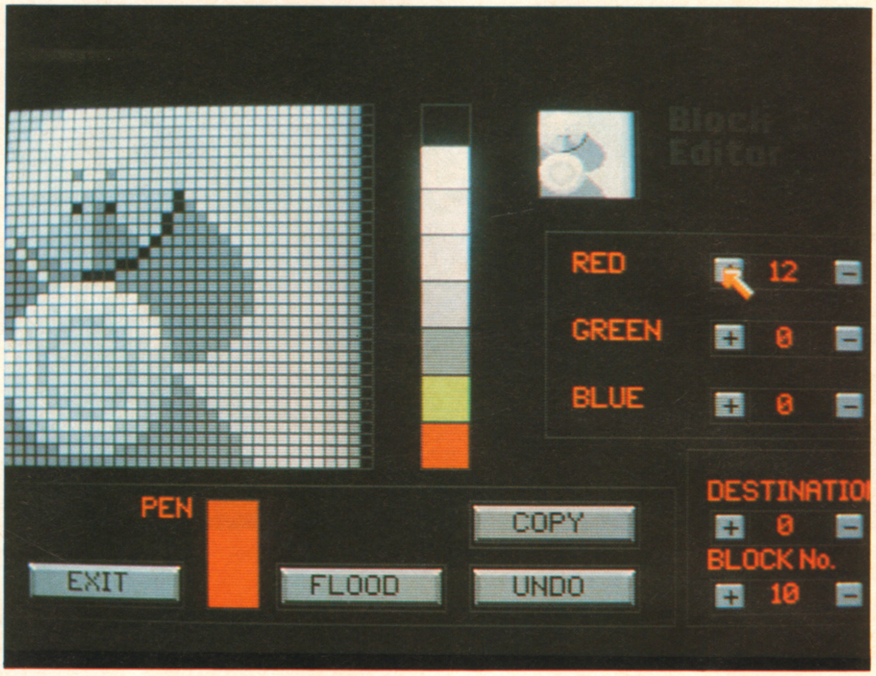
All sprites, spaceships, aliens, etc, are created on this simplistic but comprehensive drawing utility. Eight colours are at your disposal (well, seven if you discount the background), and you can copy, slide and mirror to your heart's content.

Constructio

n Up



You can use any D-Paint picture as a loading screen for your SEUCK-designed game. Let's use Venus – not a patch on the original (groan).

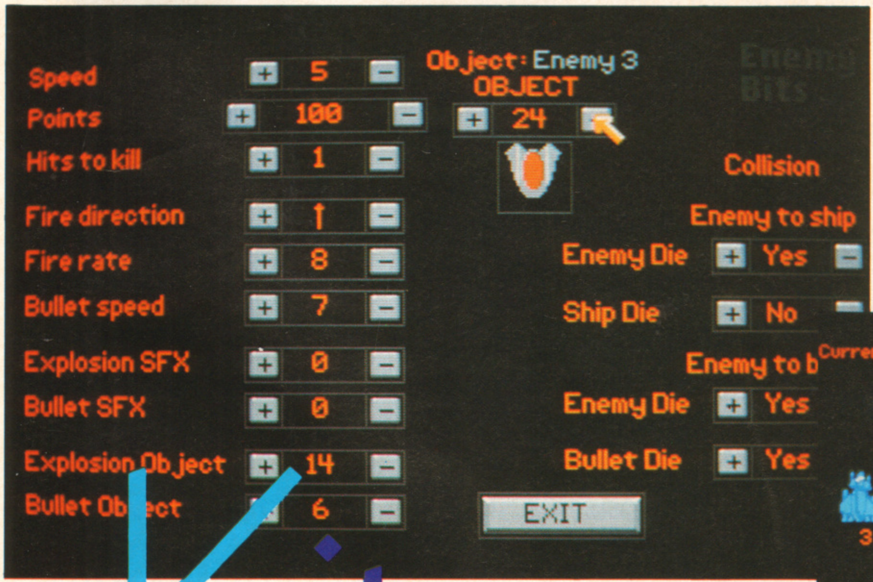

Block Editor
RED
12
GREEN
0
BLUE
0
PEN
COPY
EXIT
FLOOD
UNDO
DESTINATIO
0
BLOCK No.
10

This is where the background scenery is put together by means of building blocks. It's up to you to design your blocks efficiently, thus allowing you to bolt together as few as possible and yet compose a varied backdrop.

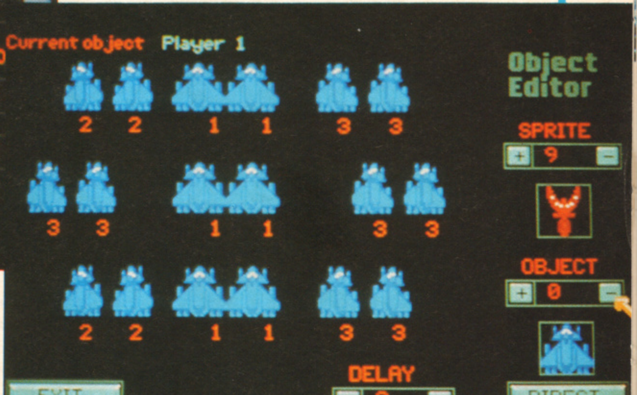
more... substantial, and the result was an instant success.

Richard Leinfellner is the man behind this Amiga conversion, which – for the benefit of anyone remotely familiar with the original – closely follows its 8-bit parent, albeit with some suitable modifications and enhancements. The sound module for example, takes advantage of the Amiga's 'standard' IFF sound format, allowing any IFF sample to be used, while **D-Paint** loading screens can be bolted on with ease.

Palace musician Richard Joseph has provided over 20 sampled sounds, ranging from firing noises and arcade-style hums to metallic clanks, snippets of speech and beefy explosions. Richard has been working for Palace for over two years now, and his back-


Enemy Bits
Collision
Enemy to ship
Enemy to b
EXIT

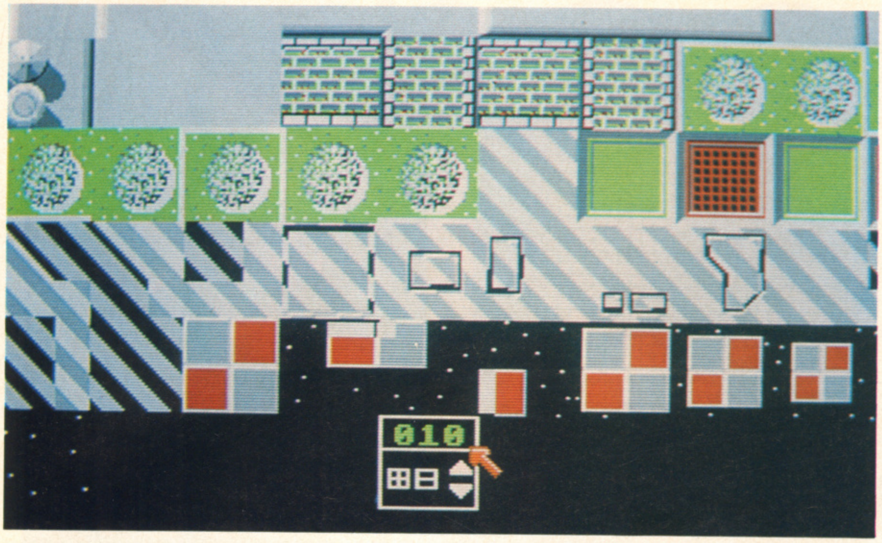
Object: Enemy 3
OBJECT 24
Speed 5
Points 100
Hits to kill 1
Fire direction ↑
Fire rate 8
Bullet speed 7
Explosion SFX 0
Bullet SFX 0
Explosion Object 14
Bullet Ob ect 6
Enemy Die Yes
Ship Die No
Enemy Die Yes
Bullet Die Yes


Object Editor
2 2 1 1 3 3
3 3 1 1 3 3
2 2 1 1 3 3
EXIT
DIRECT

Current object Player 1
SPRITE 9
OBJECT 0
DELAY 0

on Kit

The Object Editor is where you animate your sprites. Up to 18 frames can be linked together and animated. You can also determine the aliens' characteristics, such as fire rate and bullet speed, and which sounds will be used.



The block selection screen, where all the blocks you've created so far are displayed.

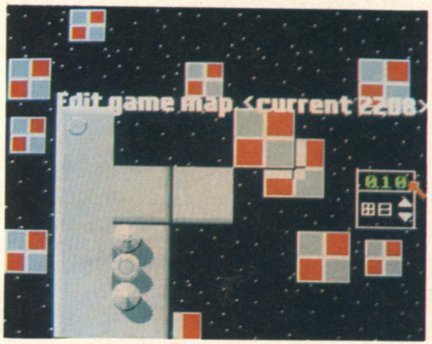
ground involves producing music for childrens television programmes, amongst other things. His first 16-bit work for Palace was the superb grunts, groans and clangs of **Barbarian**, and he has recently finished work on **Barbarian II** and now **SEUCK**. Richard Leinfellner is full of nothing but praise for his fellow Dick: "He's brilliant. He really does understand sound."

So how do you go about creating a game? Let's say you want to produce something along the lines of Mastertronic's **Sidewinder**. We need a decent spaceship to control with our joystick, so putting on our drawing hat we come up with a sleek fighting machine which we can animate so it tilts when we move the joystick left or right. How about some aliens? Always handy. We can determine where they will appear during our game and also how they will move – but we ought to have a backdrop first, so let's design some scenery for a few levels...

The aliens are effectively bolted on to the scenery, so that when you approach a particular spot, the alien you slapped down, so to speak, does what you told it to do when you put it there. When you're ready... in go the firing noises, along with the bleeps, hums, buzzes and booms. A little fine tuning perhaps, and... And there you have it.

Oh, and don't forget to save your progress regularly – we don't want to lose a whole day's work because of one silly little lapse in concentration, now do we?...

The finishing touches are currently being put to a couple of demonstration games to accompany the package. They prove incredibly useful as you are given the opportunity to fiddle with them and can see exactly how things come together.



A badly designed map, courtesy of Gary Penn.

RICHARD LEINFELLNER A POTTED HISTORY (CONDENSED)

It was electronics whizz Richard Leinfellner and Pete Stone who started Palace Software in January of 1984, with a little help (finance) from Palace Films. Their first release was based on Sam Raimi's controversial 'video nasty' ***The Evil Dead****. It was pretty poor, but due to the subject matter it succeeded in getting Palace noticed. But it was their second release (and Richard's second game) which put them on the map... the arcade adventure* ***Cauldron****.*

By the time ***Cauldron II*** *hit the streets a year later in 1986, Richard was acting as more of a product manager and less of a programmer, and it wasn't until late last year that he formed a freelance programming team with an old friend, who wishes to remain nameless. Richard is content to tackle the Amiga, while his partner is the man responsible for* ***Barbarian II*** *on the ST. "What's to come after Amiga Barbarian II? Oh, we've plenty of other projects to be getting on with, but I shan't say anything about them just yet."*

Thank you Richard.

A What SEUCK does remarkably well is give you an insight into how much time and effort has to go into producing a game. Good graphics – and that's not necessarily well drawn graphics – take a long time to produce, and 'debugging' or tweaking is most time consuming. I would say you could probably write a game of saleable quality, but it takes time, for much the same reasons as programming from scratch takes time – you need a good idea in the first place and it's not simply a matter of slapping bits around willy nilly. Obviously graphics and sound can't really be rated, and PLAYABILITY in this instance really refers to EASE OF USE. There's no reason why VALUE and OVERALL should mean anything different, although the former category takes POTENTIAL into consideration. In conclusion, it must be said that SEUCK is great. It's easy enough to use and rather engrossing once you get going. Whether you eventually write a game or not becomes immaterial – there's plenty of fun to be gleaned from being creative instead of destructive, and as such it comes highly recommended.

PRICE:	£24.99
RELEASE DATE:	Mid-November
GRAPHICS	N/A
SOUND	N/A
PLAYABILITY	80%
VALUE	81%

OVERALL 84%

ST An ST version is unlikely, although the prospect of a conversion is currently being considered by Palace. More news when we have it...

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TIPS

It's all very well knowing which games are worthy of your undivided attention, but there comes a time when someone, somewhere needs to know more than just how well they play. "How do I get past...?" "What do I do when...?" These are typical pleas for help. Can your conscience take any more? If you happen to have stumbled across any useful cheat modes, clever tactics or original listings which could bring hand relief to frustrated games players, or you just happen to be Plain cocky and can provide general hints for any game available, why not play the Good Samaritan and share your knowledge? Send anything remotely worthwhile to TIPS, The One, Priority Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. And just to make it worth your while there's software up for grabs for the sender of the best original tips we print each month.

INSANITY FIGHT

Microdeal/Linel

▷ Amiga owners currently struggling to reach the later levels of Microdeal's ageing vertically scrolling blaster need struggle no longer. The more supple among you can move to the next level by simply (!) pressing the 'L' key, and holding down both mouse buttons and the joystick fire button – all at the same time! Thanks to Martin Cliff of Oldham.

PLATOON

Ocean

▷ A quick cheat for the Amiga version of this uninspired film tie-in... type HAMBURGER in the high score table to activate the cheat mode, then start the game and use function keys F1 to F4 to load the different levels.

ARKANOID: REVENGE OF DOH

Imagine

▷ As promised last month, here's the second part of the cheat for Peter johnson's quality coin-op conversion... When all your lives are lost and the title screen is displayed, hit the CAPS LOCK and type MAGENTA. Now when you start a new game, press 'S' to open up the gates either side of the screen so you can progress to the next... But even more useful is this: lose all your lives to return to the title screen, hit the CAPS LOCK and type in MAGENTA again, only this time also type DALEY to take you right to the last screen. Thank you Peter...

HADES NEBULA

Nexus

▷ So you're one of the few people who own a copy of this old boot, eh? and just like Tim Cork of Stevenage, you can't seem to survive longer than a few seconds? Well here's some help... When on the high score table, type MONITOR. (and this includes the full stop in case you were wondering). Play again and you should find that infinite lives are yours for the wasting. Thank you Matthew Hayne of Birmingham for that.

ENDURO RACER

Electric Dreams

▷ The recent release of the excellent **Super Hang-On** makes Electric Dreams' rather poor conversion of Sega's **Enduro Racer** look even more pitiful. Quality aside, its reappearance on Ocean's compilation means that more people will be playing it and consequently interested in some help. So here you have it, courtesy of Jim Swinson of Battersea... While racing, type in CHEAT. Now press 'T' for an extra ten seconds of racing time or 'S' for some extra speed. Better still, press 'F' to automatically advance to the next checkpoint.

IKARI WARRIORS

Elite

▷ Quite why the Japanese named the two heroes of this neat shoot 'em up Paul and Vince is anyone's guess. They sound more like hairdressers than crack commandos... C O'Brien of Cheshire knows how to beef them both up a bit, and here's how: play a game and get a score high enough to put you into the high score table. Enter FREERIDE instead of your name and press RETURN. Now when the high score table is next displayed it should say 1988 FEB where you entered FREERIDE, which indicates that the cheat mode is active. Start the game again and you should find yourself invincible.

GOLDRUNNER

Microdeal

▷ So it's getting a little long in the tooth and you may have heard it all before, but there are still some people who have never seen these cheats before and need to be spoon-fed if they want to rack up more than a few hundred points. Press the 'I' key at any time to enter the bonus round, or better still, press 'U' to advance to the next level. There, that's better.

Starglider II

The pleas for help have been flooding in thick and fast, which is why this issue of Starglider II gets the full treatment, courtesy of Steve Jarratt (with help from Steve Williams of Newton Aycliffe in County Durham; Christopher Hill of Renfrewshire up in Scotland; Richard Symons of Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan, and Jim Houston from Bury in Lancs).

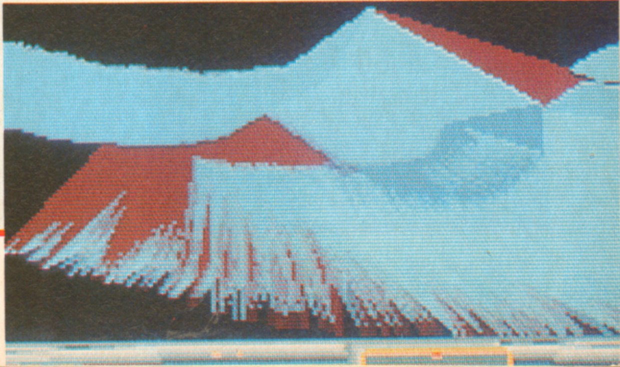
GO GO GO!

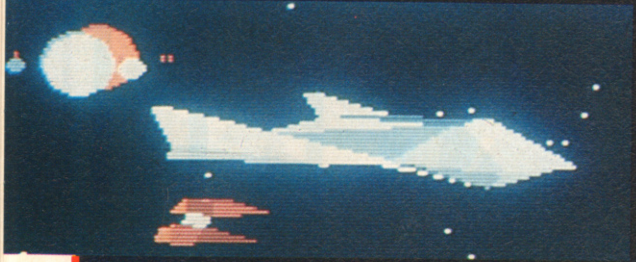
It's a good idea to familiarise yourself with the controls of the Icarus by simply flying around for an hour or so. In this time you can observe the layout of the Solician system, the position of the planets and moons and the location of the more obvious objects that are needed.

When you're ready to begin the mission, restart the game from scratch and fly to one of the tunnel entrances on Apogee (85-52 or 82-34). Follow the accompanying map and head for the hangar at 67-30. Here, the Apogean technicians ask you if you want them to build a neutron bomb. You won't get very far if you don't, so answer 'Y'. They then provide an interplanetary shopping list of the items required (see panel).

Many of these objects are simply collected from sites around the system, while some are obtained by trading with Solicians at other underground depots within the system. Alternatively, a few sorties against pirate ships can be extremely worthwhile; smaller objects such as Castrobars and Vistan wine can be collected using the tractor beam from the floating debris of a recently blasted pirate vessel.

Collecting these items is relatively simple – it's more a matter of time than trouble. However, constant attacks from the Egrons have to be fended off, and the Icarus' shields replenished from time to time. The easiest way to do the latter is to collect asteroids in the tractor beam from the asteroid belt between Apogee and Millway. However, this can be a slow and fiddly process; if you are in dire need of energy, fly along the powerlines that are found on most of the planets (there's one on Apogee that runs from 54-00 to 54-90). If you happen to hit one of the pylons and the power stops, simply fly into space. On your return, the pylon has been replaced and the powerline's back up





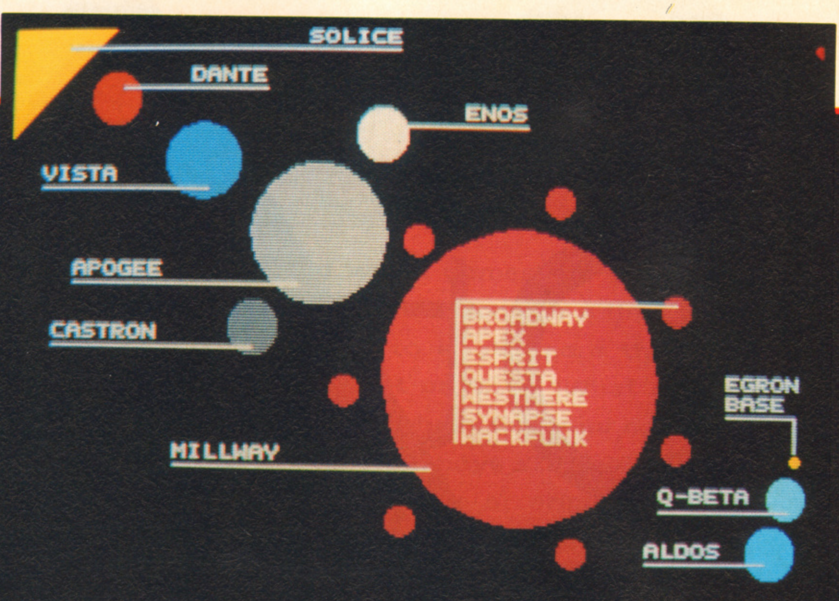
and running.

Although the Icarus can be refuelled by sun-skimming, this method leaves a lot to be desired: more often than not you find the display panel dripping down the screen. It also takes a lot longer than the other methods, and leaves you under constant attack from space pirates.

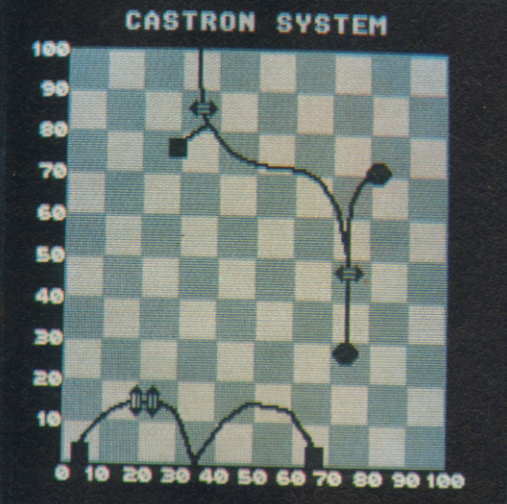
Volcanoes are similarly dangerous: if the Icarus drops too low, there's a good chance of being damaged by one of the large molten rocks that are constantly being ejected from the volcano's mouth.

Defending yourself from Egron attack is made easier by having Fiea dn Flee missiles at your disposa! These are only available from the high technical level depots on Millway's moons (located at 55-04). Four are available at a time and are simply collected by using the tractor beam.

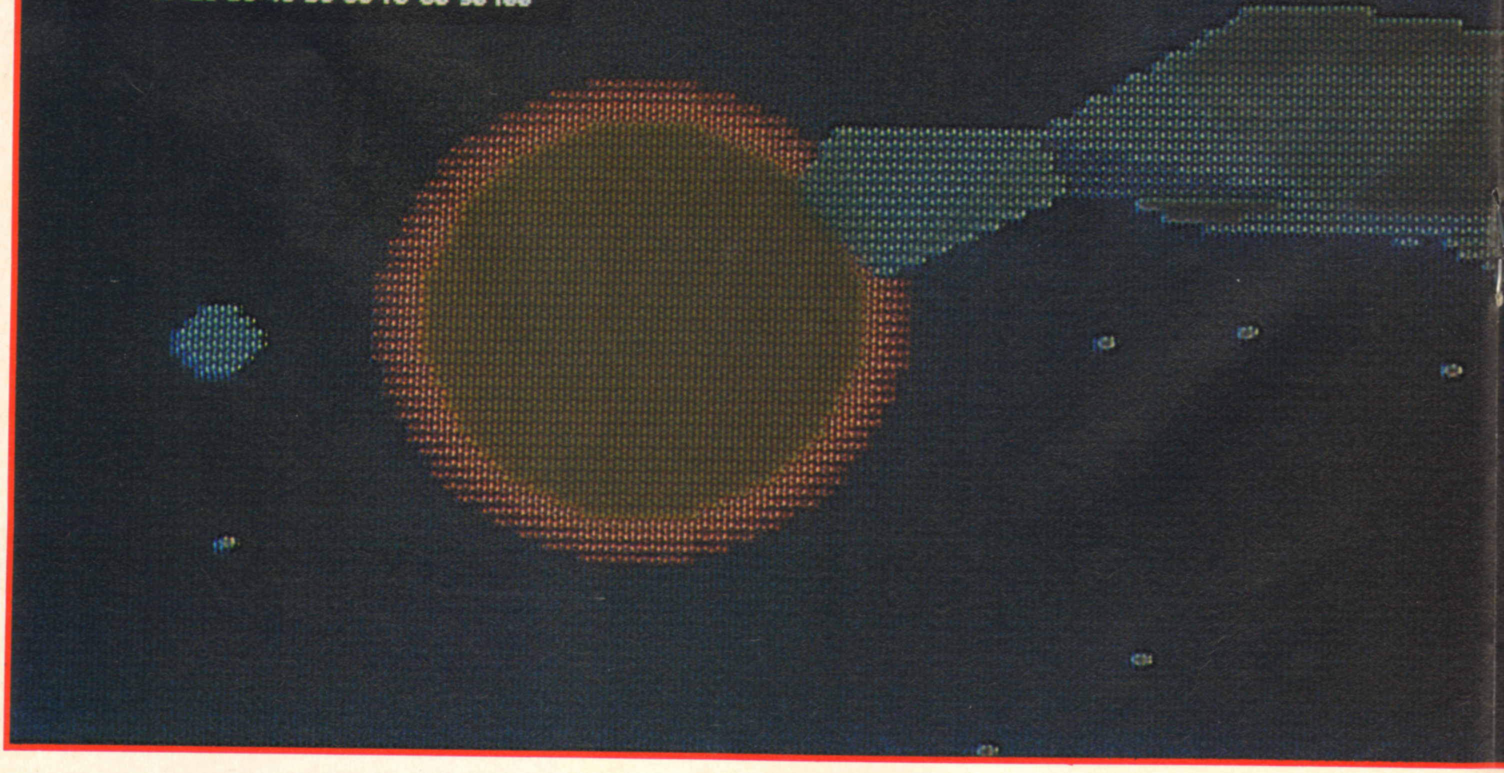
The Icarus can also be repaired by flying to the same depot on Wack-



SOLICE
DANTE
ENOS
VISTA
APOGEE
CASTRON
BROADWAY
APEX
ESPRIT
QUESTA
WESTMERE
SYNAPSE
WACKFUNK
EGRON BASE
MILLWAY
Q-BETA
ALDOS

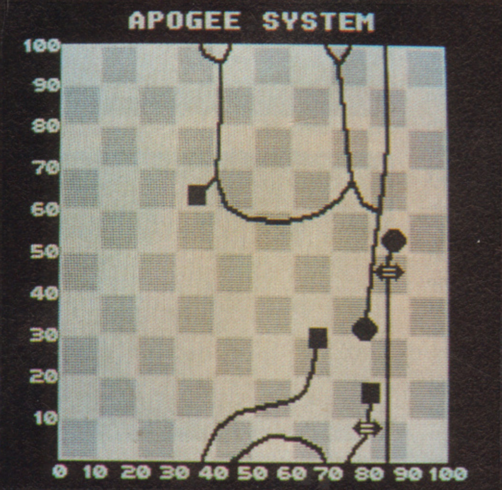


CASTRON SYSTEM
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100



funk. Here, the technicians give the ship a once-over in exchange for goods of any description.

The Egrons soon start building their defensive beam weapons on the moons of Millway. To avoid the Icarus being vapourised before getting anywhere near the space station, these installations have to be knocked out with Bouncing Bombs. The bombs are available from the depots on Castron (located at 05-00 and 66-00). Again, four are waiting to be picked up, and are simply installed in Icarus' weapons bay using the tractor beam.



Obviously, it is difficult to knock out all of the installations, but as long as there are less than seven beam weapons active, the Icarus is safe to launch its final assault on the Egron space station.

Re-fuel the Icarus, rearm with missiles, and beam the Neutron Bomb aboard — this should be sitting in the Apogean depot waiting to be collected. Set a course for the yellow moon of Q-Beta. When the Icarus is near, the 'moon' disappears to reveal the partially constructed space station protected by six sentinels. These must be destroyed using the Fire and Flee Missiles, which in turn necessitates a return trip to the moons of Millway to stock up.

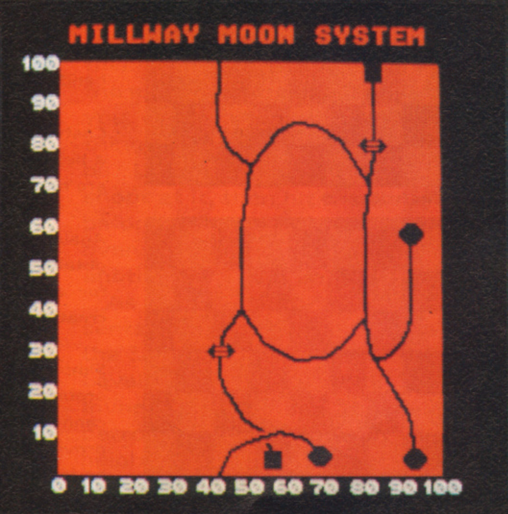
Having cleared the Egron's last line of defence, select 'Neutron Bomb', aim up the cross-hairs on the station, and let rip. Mission complete.

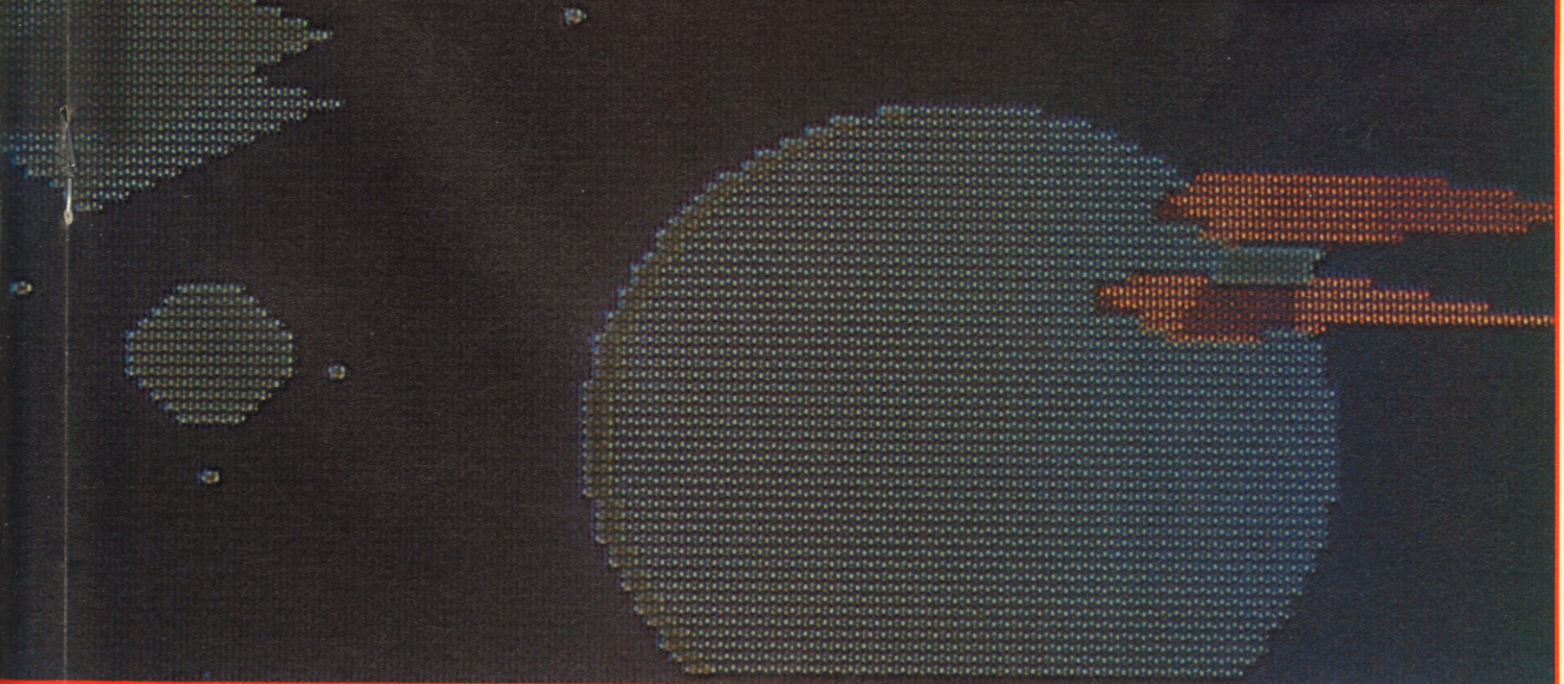
KEY

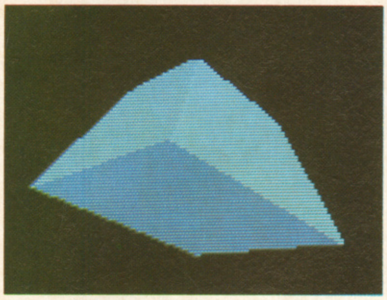
■ DEPOT

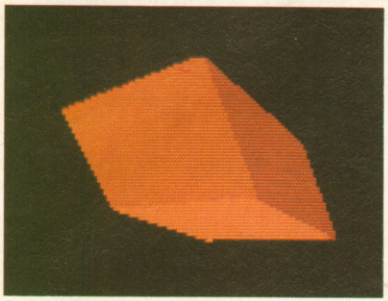
⇔ ENERGY GATE

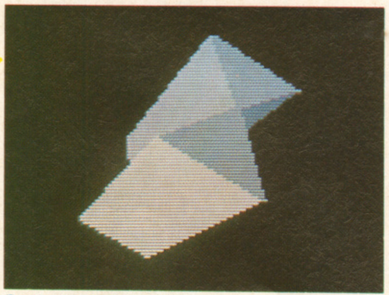
⬢ ENTRANCE

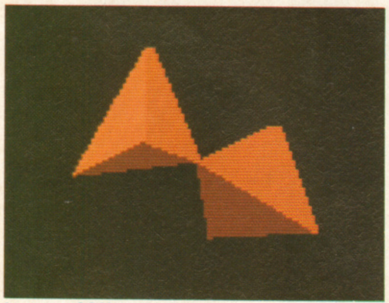


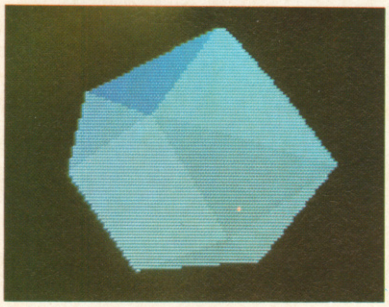


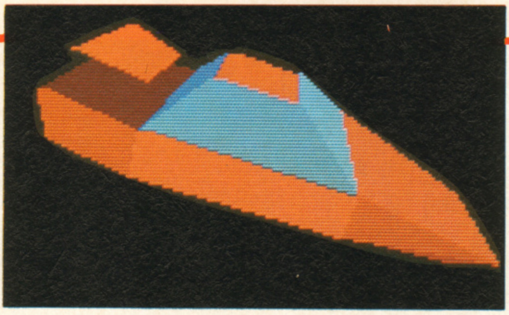

Case of Nuclear Fuel


Crate of Castrobars


Cask of Vistan Wine


Lump of Mineral Rock


Asteroid



▲ PROFESSOR HALSEN TAYMAR

The prof is 'burning rubber' in an Emma-2 hover car on the surface of Broadway. His driving is rapid and erratic; it may take a while to get the tractor beam locked onto him. Because the technicians on Apogee cannot begin constructing the neutron bomb without him, the professor is first on the shopping list.

CASE OF NUCLEAR FUEL

Nuclear fuel can be found lying around on Aldos, at various locations (eg: 75-09). The case should be no trouble to find, but if a spare Icarus pilot's couch is at hand, it can be exchanged for nuclear fuel on Esprit.

CRATE OF CASTROBARS

Castrobars can be 'stolen' from pirates, or traded for a petrified tree on Castron (depot at 66-00). Trees are readily available on the surface of Enos.

Again, found in the cargo hold of pirate vessels, or obtained on Castron (depot at 05-00), by swapping it for a bouncing ball. These strange, Amiga-demo creatures are found bouncing around on Vista.

LUMP OF MINERAL ROCK

Simple: go to Q-Beta — there are plenty just dotted around the landscape. In the unlikely event that they cannot be discovered, the Solicians on Apex will provide one in exchange for a pyramid. These are to be found on Enos (24-12) and Vista (23-74).

ASTEROID

The asteroid belt is to be found situated between the orbits of Millway and Apogee (flying through this region with the Stardrive activated is fraught with danger: the ship is continually brought to a halt by contact with one of the large rocks. To lower the chance of collision, keep moving the mouse in a circular motion while flying along).

FLAT DIAMOND

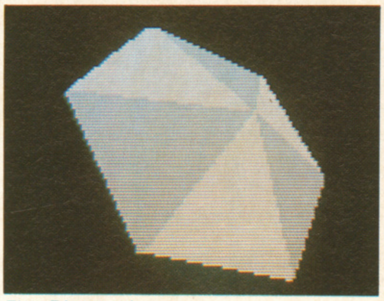
These are available from the Solicians on Questa, as long as they have an Egron mechanical whale in return. The whales are to be found swimming in the upper atmosphere of Millway, travelling between Q-Beta and Aldos an also near the planet Castron.

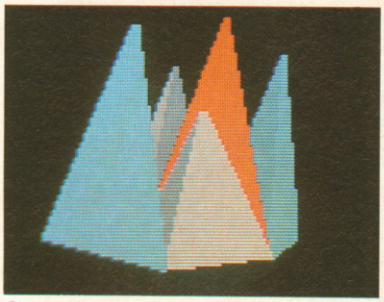
CLUSTER OF NODULES

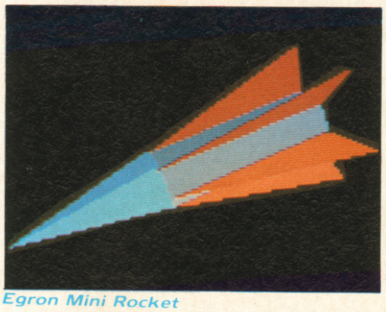
There are plenty of these dotted around the surface of Dante. However, they can always be obtained in exchange for an Egron mechanical duck from the Solicians on Synapse. The ducks are usually to be seen whenever space whales are around.

EGRON MINI-ROCKET

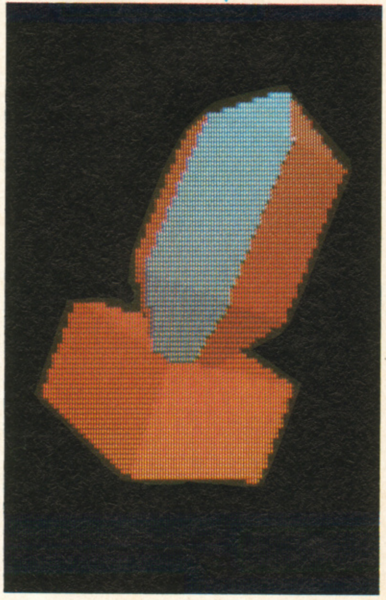
The Egron's disgarded weaponry is to be found at a number of locations, such as Castron (87-50), or Aldos (22-10). The rocket can always be purchased from Westmere, though, for the bargain price of one asteroid.


Flat Diamond


Cluster of Nodules


Egron Mini Rocket

▼ Neutron Bomb



STARQUAKE

Mandarin

So you've just bought an ST complete with a free copy of Starquake (amongst other things), and you can't seem to get very far, eh? To help you get about a bit, here's a complete list of teleport codes, courtesy of a John Smart from Lewisham in Kent...

FLIED
CHING
DAVRO
SOLUN
TABET
LUANG
TSOIN
KALED
ROKEA
HINDI
SOCHI
NICHA
BORNO
CWORE
KWANG
ADKEA

RETURN TO GENESIS

Firebird

Steve Bak and Pete Lyon's unimpressive horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up seems to have been causing some grief of late, so a cheat is hereby provided to make life bearable once again. When on the title screen, type WASP.ASM to activate the cheat mode, then press the F5 key for invincibility. Thanks once again go to Robert Jackson.

CARRIER COMMAND

Rainbird

Mr O'Brien of Cheshire also has a choice cheat mode for Realtime's Number One success... Commence play as usual then pause the game with the mouse button (this is important). Type in GROW OLD ALONG WITH ME (and that's including all the spaces) and press the '+' key on the numeric keypad. You should now find that all your Manta and Walrus craft are completely shielded from enemy attack. Sadly, this cheat doesn't protect your carrier. Oh, and should you tire of being considerably hardier, press the '–' key to disable the cheat mode.

EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Domark

This cheat only works for the very playable ST conversion of this classic Atari coin-op. Anyone with anything for the Amiga?... Wait until the credits screen appears in the attract sequence, then hold down the TAB key and type in VEKTORGRAFIX. Now you can press L, C or D for pictures of Luke, C-3PO and Darth Vader. Crikey, what a cheat. Actually, the best bit is that you should now be invincible... Thank you Steve James of Tividale in Birmingham.

LEATHERNECK

Microdeal

Steve Bak seems to slip a cheat mode into everything he writes, and this playable Ikari Warriors-inspired romp is no exception. When the mission starts, type CUTHBERTNECK and then press the F3 key. Lo and behold, you are now completely immune to the enemy's machine gun fire and grenades. Mind you, it's worth bearing in mind that you can still be killed by bullets or grenades unleashed by any colleagues in play...

ROLLING THUNDER

US Gold

Granted, the original coin-op wasn't up to much, and the ST and Amiga conversions are even worse. But what if you bought a copy? And worse still, you can't get very far... Type JIMBBY to be blessed with infinite energy, then press the 'I' key to move to the next level. Thanks to Chris Cooper of Newcastle.

KARATE KID II

Microdeal

Should you feel the need to progress a level in this lacklustre licensed combat game, just press the 'P' key. Robert Jackson from Durham is the sender of that gem.

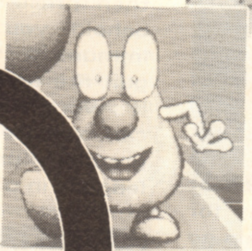
VIRUS

Firebird

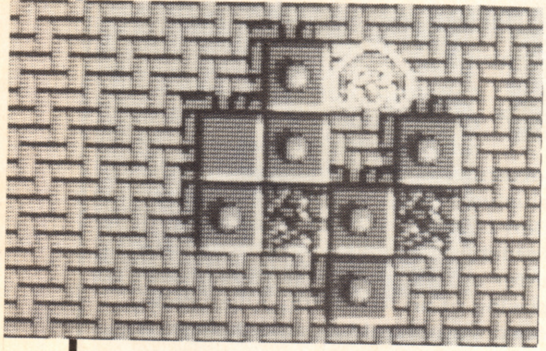
Following our first complete Players Guide by Julian Rignall, we've had dozens of letters telling us where to find the elusive Mystery Ship. But it was Ben Lloyd of New Barnet in Hertfordshire who also felt the need to offer an alternative method of disposing of an Attractor. Julian reckoned you should approach from a high altitude, then dive, guns ablazing. But, as Ben quite sensibly points out, if you don't kill it first time, it usually pulls you straight into the ground. So, he suggests this: approach the Attractor from the side, over the sea if possible so you can't get dragged into anything protruding from the landscape. Let it pull you in while you shoot at it, then hit the thrust just before you ram the Attractor. Pass over it, turn and come back for another run guns spitting death.

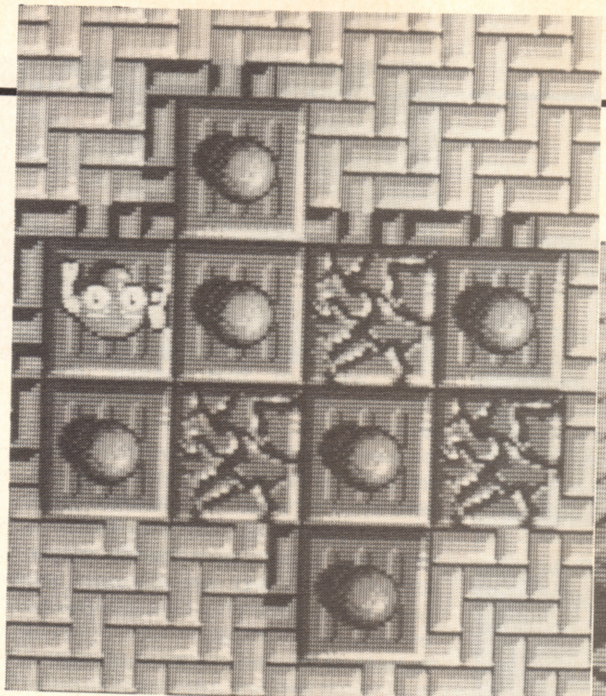
As for the Mystery Ship... Represented on your map as a black dot, the Mystery Ship first appears on Level Six. It looks a bit like a Space Invader (remember those?) and patrols the landscape at a fixed height, but with no obvious flight pattern. Its method of defence is to unleash red and white homing missiles of sorts which behave very similarly to pests. A missile should take care of the Mystery Ship itself, but on later levels it has the annoying habit of causing your missiles to fly around in circles, which means it takes a long time for them to hit their mark. The ship takes a good 20 or so shots to kill, and your efforts are rewarded with a 2,000 point bonus, with 150 points awarded for each homing missile destroyed. So now you know.

Bomb

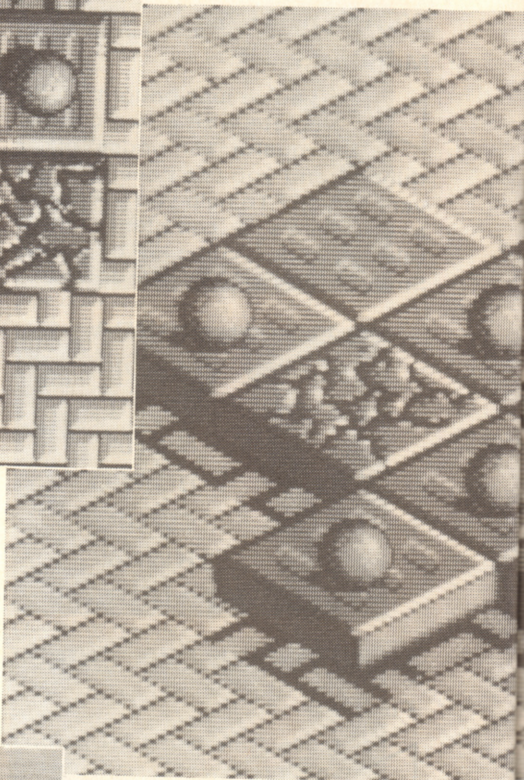


Puzzle Games, you either love them or hate them. Graham Taylor quite likes them. Bombuzal is a puzzle game with a vengeance, but does the addition of some 3D graphics justify the full-price tag?





If the mood takes you, you can play Bombuzal in two dimensions. Seen here is such a view of the first level . . .



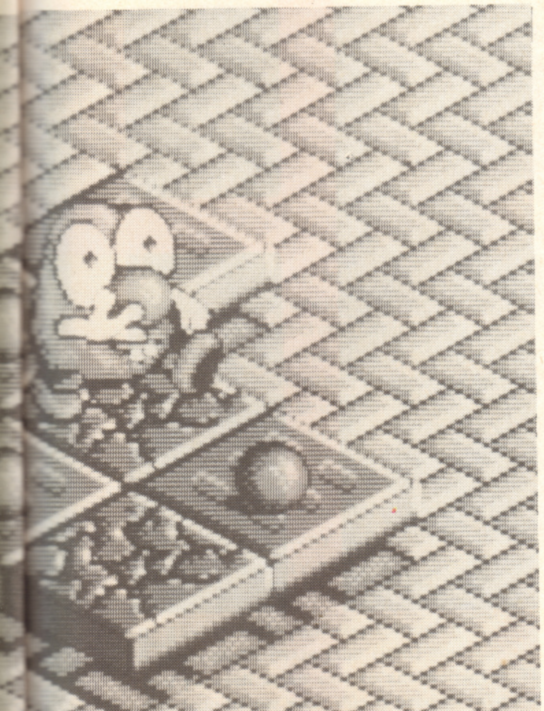
And here's the same level in glorious 3D. The joystick controls are a bit fiddly, but on the whole it's easier to play in this mode. Time is running out for our fat friend, and there are bombs to be blown . . .

Like doing IQ tests? Are you the sort of person who insists on doing all those ridiculous match puzzles you find on the back of the beer mats? **Bombuzal** could be the game for you. It's almost the game for me but I'm not sure, it manages to be both addictive and irritating at the same time and though there are some reasonable 3D graphics I couldn't help wondering whether the whole thing might not be better without them.

Bombuzal is about blowing up bombs. You control a sort of cutesy (sickly) upside down blancmange with arms and legs. Over a vast number of increasingly complex levels you move your blancmange, square by square, detonating bombs by jumping on them. The objective is to clear all the bombs from a level without blowing yourself up and within a time limit.

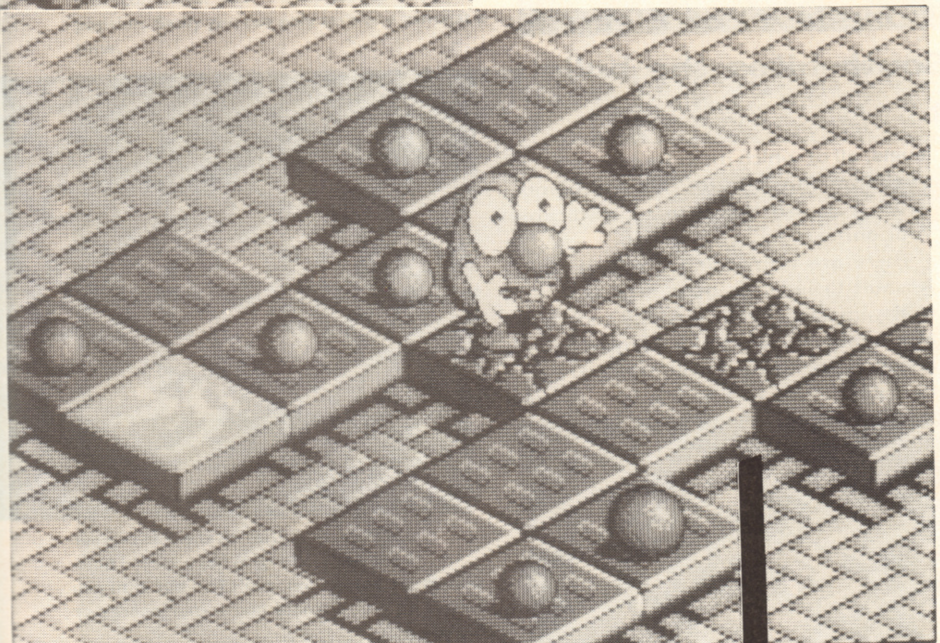
But **Bombuzal** is no arcade game. The challenge on each level is not essentially to do with reacting quickly but rather thinking quickly. The challenge is to get at the bombs in the right way. Each level is constructed of a series of tiles. Some tiles resist explosions, some do not. Some tiles disappear after you've walked over them once, some transport you to somewhere else in the level. Other squares are 'slippery' and slide you in the direction you are currently heading. As you can imagine, this makes getting from point A to point B a surprisingly difficult task.

Then there are the bombs themselves. Some, once detonated, merely blow up the square they are on. Others blow up several squares around them. This may in turn ignite another bomb and another and so on... Confused? You will be! Some tiles are slotted – this means that bombs may be moved



down the slot from one tile to another – perhaps enabling you to avoid a chain reaction. On the other hand, perhaps not.

There's more. On later levels there are switches which change the tile arrangements in various ways, perhaps making a tile appear from nowhere. Then there are other threats – Sinister and Dexter. One always moves right, the other always moves left. Clearing a level can be a brain-addling experience. You frequently get to the point where it seems definitely, absolutely impossible to complete a level where the little blancmange has been blown to smithereens so often that you're ready to smash the joystick when...



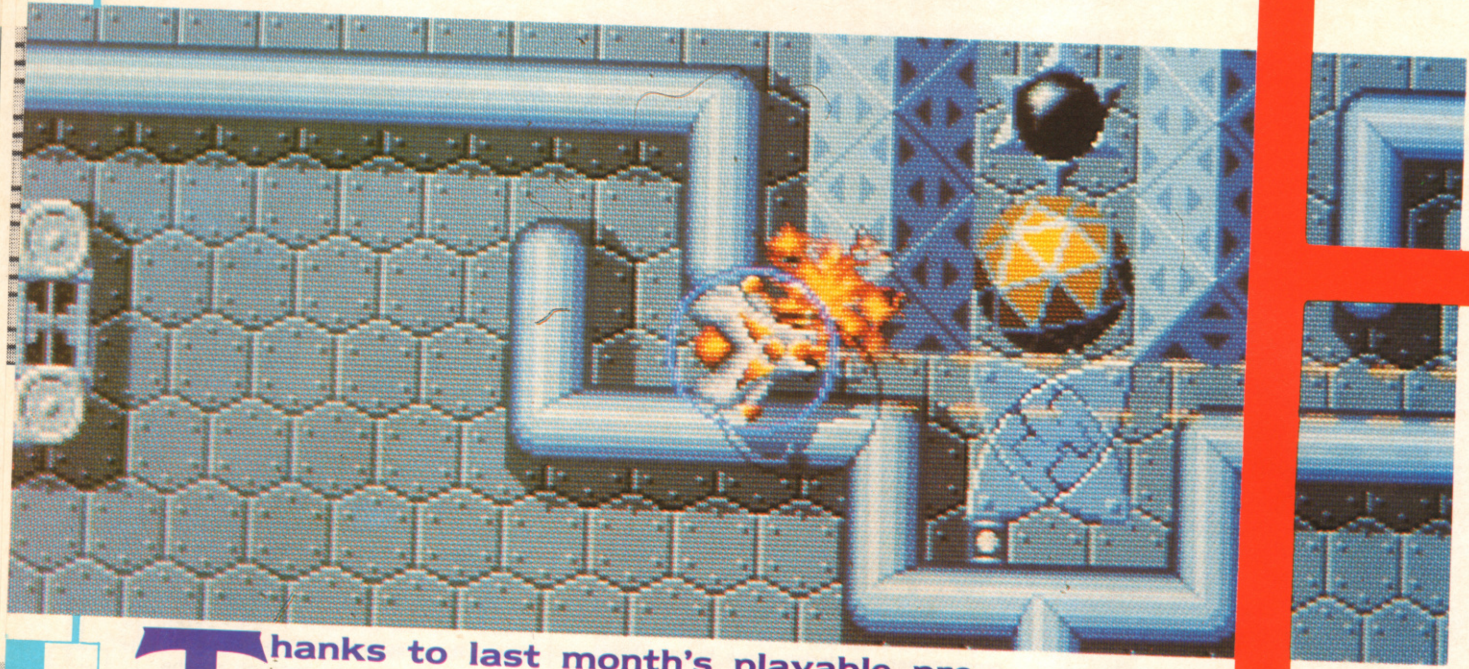
▼ **More 3D puzzle frolics in Tony Crowther and David Bishop's** Bombuzal. **Incidentally, Image Works managed to persuade an assortment of magazines and programmers to design some brain-twisting levels. So watch out for Andrew Braybrook's, Jeff Minter's, Jon Ritman's and maybe even ours . . .**

buzal

A It probably won't come as any great surprise to learn that the Amiga incarnation is virtually identical to the ST version apart from some slightly less muffled sounds.

ST Bombuzal is certainly clever and it has some neat touches. The graphics, though not required to be that varied, are large and the blancmange is provided with a few cute facial expressions (I particularly liked his "Oh no I'm going to blow up" hands over the eyes pose). Sound is completely adequate, the explosions which are the most important thing are reasonably effective. Some thought had been paid to gameplay as well. The problem with games like Bombuzal is that once you've figured out how to do a level, that's it, no surprises. This means tediously having to go through all the levels again to where you got to last. Or it would except that every six levels or so you are given a code word to get you back to the current level from the opening screen. Were it not for this feature my ST would have been dust ten minutes into playing the game. Criticisms? I'm not entirely sure about the joystick control, I tested the game out on two entirely different joysticks and found in both cases the responses were seriously oversensitive – it was sometimes very easy to accidentally push your character right off the level and into oblivion just by not being light enough on the joystick – this can't be the point, surely? The other criticism may be more personal. In the bad old days of Spectrum games this was just the sort of thing that turned up on budget and everybody said "Ideal budget game". It still is and I'm not sure that the addition of some 16-bit graphics to the same basic concept really makes that much difference. It's fun but it's sort of insignificant as well. I'll concede though, that for some people – the sort who think Mensa is a good idea – Bombuzal will be a blast.

PRICE	£19.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	43%
SOUND	49%
PLAYABILITY	62%
VALUE	49%
OVERALL	**60%**



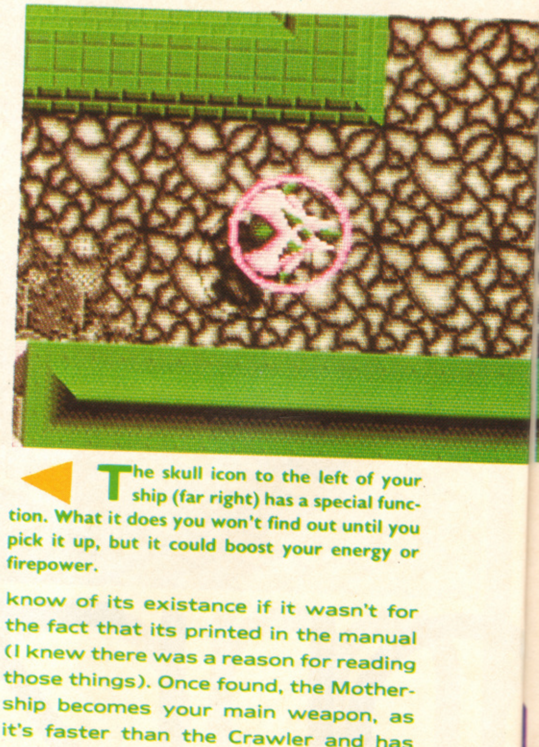
F

Thanks to last month's playable preview, most of you already have hands on experience of one level of Electronic Arts' blaster. Phil South bites the bullet and checks out the rest.

Those of you who saw the level which was on last month's cover-mounted disk will already be vaguely familiar with Electronic Arts' latest collect and shoot 'em up – but for the rest of you, here's a quick look at what it's all about. The finished product, a debut from Bullfrog Productions, comprises 14 alien-infested levels, all of which must be scoured for pieces of an ancient hidden bomb which you can then use to eradicate your opposition.

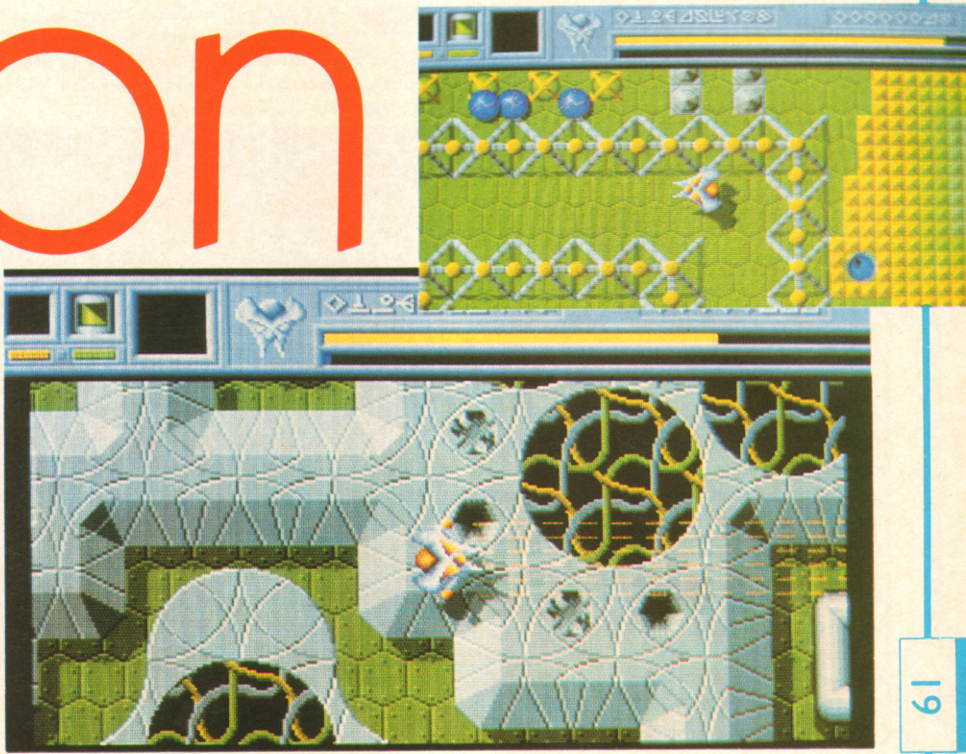
There are two craft to control: The Assault Crawler, a small orange tank that appears on boot-up, and the Mothership which is hidden by an advanced cloaking device at the start of the game – in fact you might never know of its existance if it wasn't for the fact that its printed in the manual (I knew there was a reason for reading those things). Once found, the Mothership becomes your main weapon, as it's faster than the Crawler and has more powerful weapons.

When you feel sufficientlyb mobile and *au fait* with the Mothership's con-



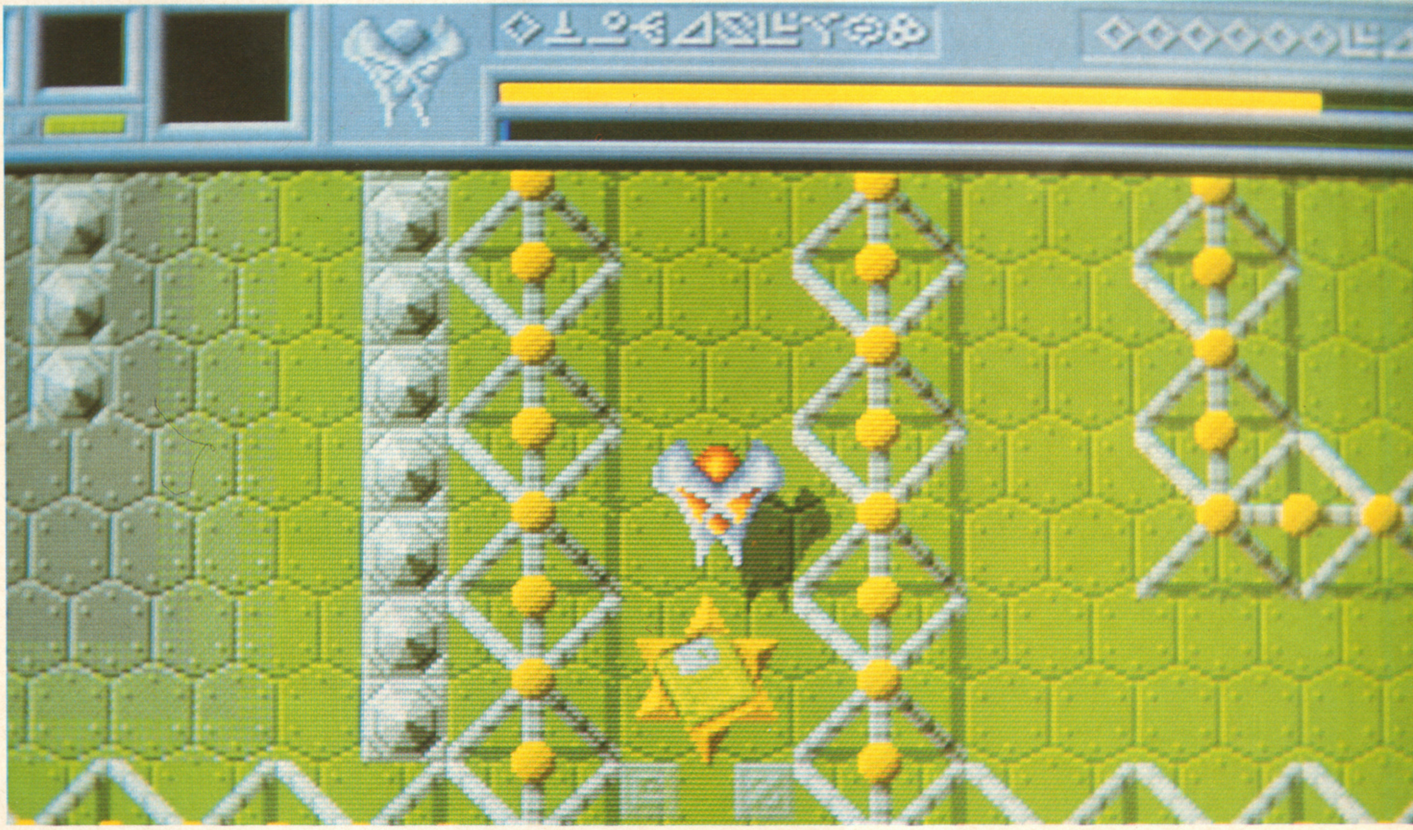
The skull icon to the left of your ship (far right) has a special function. What it does you won't find out until you pick it up, but it could boost your energy or firepower.

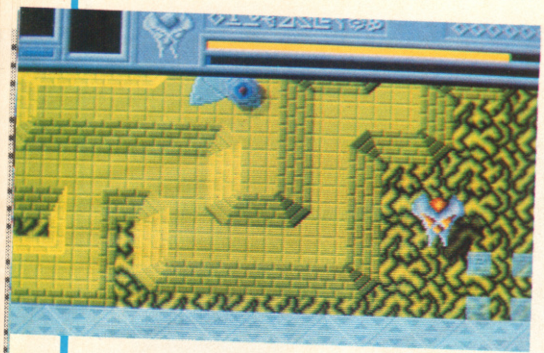
usion



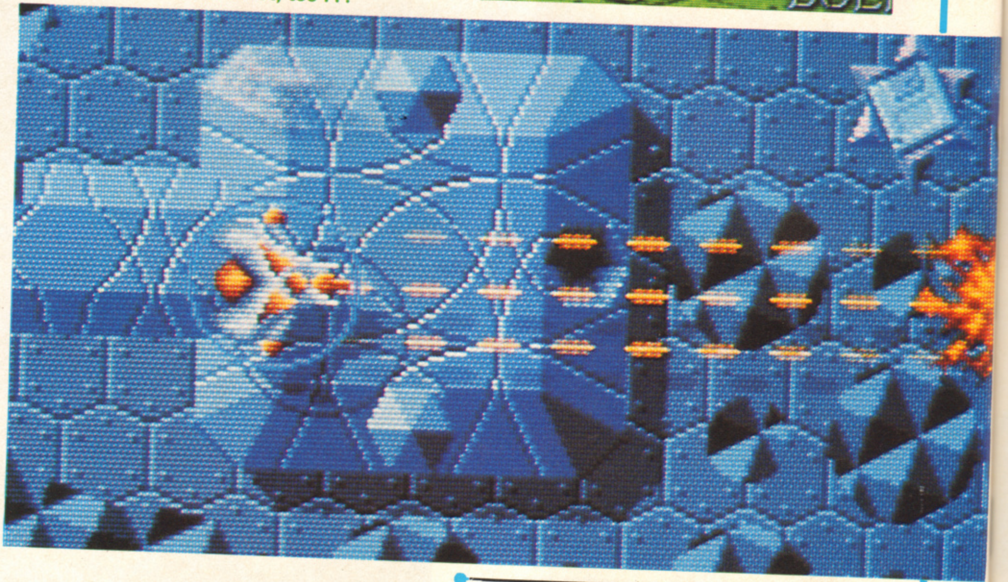
trols, it's time to head off in search of the bomb. Progress is made by flying over icon switches which are distributed around the levels – usually in hard to get at places. Collected icons are stored in the Crawler's memory and are used to open doors, drop force fields and open the transporers from level to level. Other icons contain new weapons for the Mothership, extra shields, four way lasers and supplemantary energy supplies.

Having made your way through a simplistic maze (top right) you find yourself at an exit to another level. The disk icon below your ship is used to save your position. Sadly you can only save one game at a time.





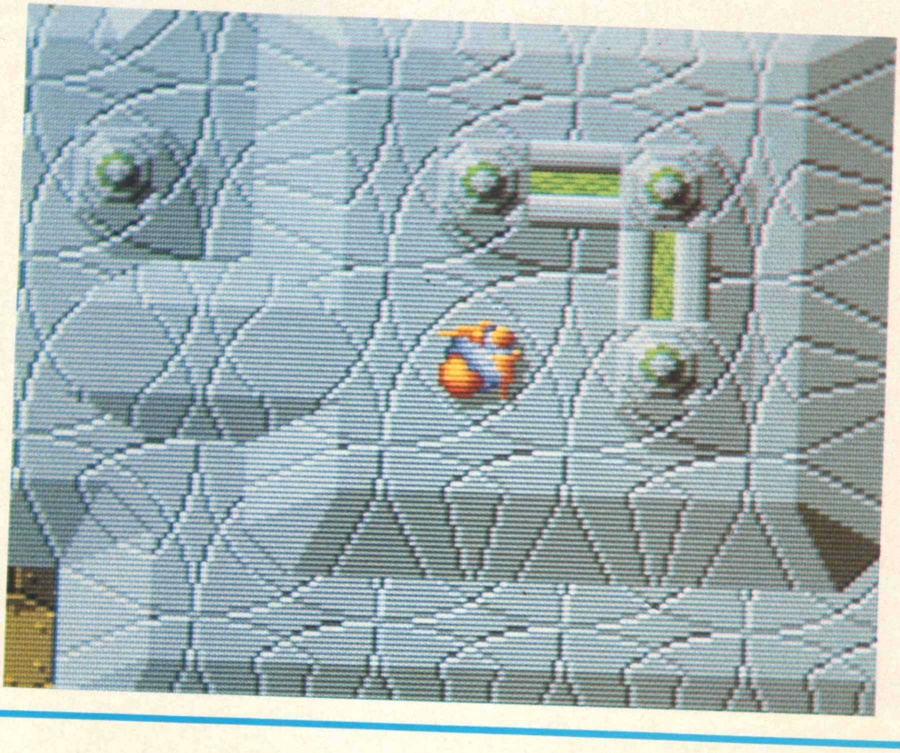
It's not all mindless blasting in Fusion, oh no. There are icons to collect which affect the scenery, opening previously inaccessible areas and so on. And, and . . . and there's lots to shoot, too . . .



Everthing about the background has a look of solidity and realism, and all of the objects and the lairs from which they spring have been carefully shaded and shaped to match the futuristic landscapes. The flying saucers which appear through the revolving floor sections are particularly impressive, as are the bomb sections – very cute indeed.

But the major factor that makes **Fusion** 'the game most likely to...' is the fact that the gameplay is every bit as good as the (impressive) graphics. The sprites, backdrops and sound combine to make this an intoxicating experience. The puzzles are hard, but not impossible; it's just enough to keep you going.

Fusion features two levels of difficulty – Normal and Expert. Either way, this is the start of the game, with you in control of the Assault Crawler – the only craft capable of colecting the coloured icons. The Mothership is hidden a short distance away, but danger is also just around the corner . . .



A Fusion impresses right from the start. The theme tune is a catchy little number, but the most interesting thing about it is the quality of the sounds. The graphics also stretch the machine's capabilities, and the colours have been carefully chosen to allow the most variation of tones with the smallest pallette. Some very subtle stipples can be seen in some floor areas giving the impression of a massive amount of colours. Apart from the colouring, the graphics themselves are nicely accomplished and clearly show the hand of a real Amiga expert at work.

PRICE:	**£24.95**
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	79%
PLAYABILITY	80%
VALUE	70%

OVERALL 80%

ST Surprisingly, Electronic Arts has decided to produce a version for the ST. The work is at a very early stage, so there is nothing to show as yet. Chances are that it will probably not be as colourful as the Amiga version, but the gameplay should survive the transition intact.

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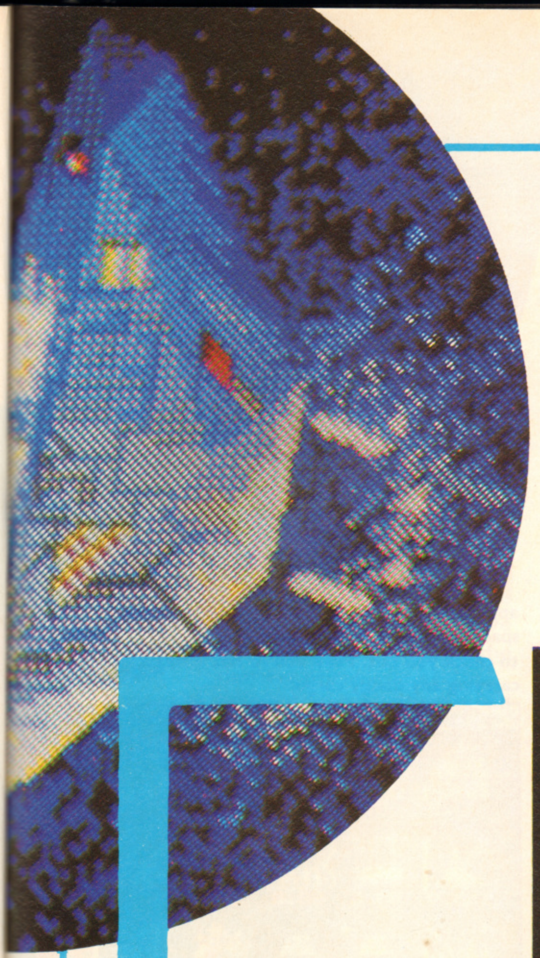
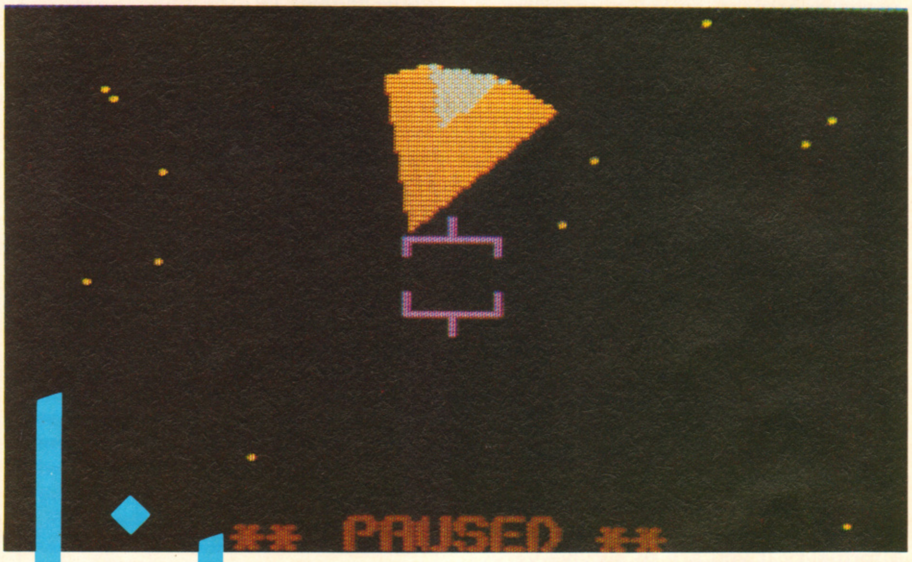
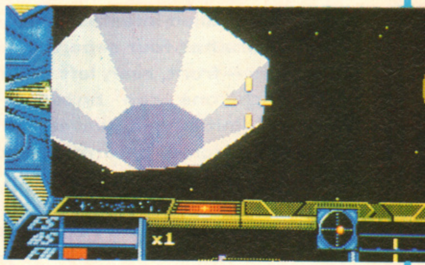
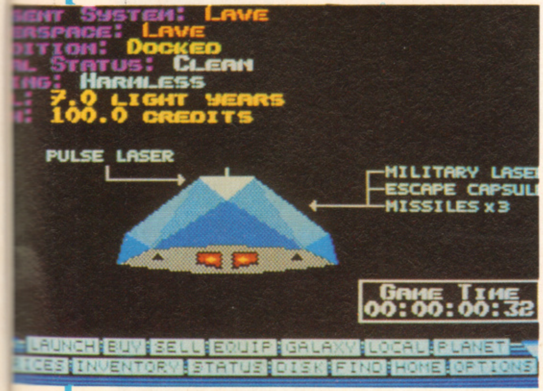




Elite





```
ENT SYSTEM: LAVE
ASPACE: LAVE
ITION: DOCKED
L STATUS: CLEAN
ING: HARMLESS
L: 7.0 LIGHT YEARS
: 100.0 CREDITS

PULSE LASER                    MILITARY LASE
                               ESCAPE CAPSUL
                               MISSILES x3

                               GAME TIME
                               00:00:00:32
LAUNCH BUY SELL EQUIP GALAXY LOCAL PLANET
ICES INVENTORY STATUS DISK FIND HOME OPTIONS
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If you were to ask any seasoned computer games player to name a classic piece of software, their reply would almost certainly be **Elite**. Released over four years ago by Acornsoft, **Elite** was written by David Braben and Ian Bell, at the time fellow students at Jesus College, Cambridge. Unlike any game that had ever been produced before, **Elite** was not just a simple shoot 'em up or strategy game. It was a mixture of everything and anything...; flight simulation, shoot 'em up, strategy, adventure, trading... the list of game styles goes on. More impressive is the fact that it was squeezed into a miniscule 32K! Instantly proclaimed as a BBC classic, it went on to be known as one of the best games ever when it was converted to various other 8-bit formats. Now at long last **Elite** has made it to the Atari ST and Amiga.

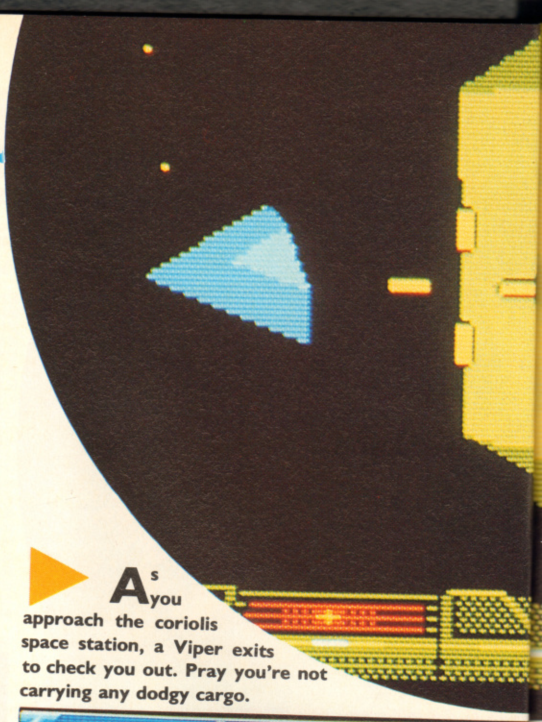
▲ **Eek! It's a Thargoid, the roughest toughest Insect warriors in the Galaxy (they've had their fear glands removed you know). Defeating these muthers is a million to one, so they say.**

Elite is essentially a space adventure, set many hundreds of years into the future, you are cast as an aspiring young space pilot whose aim is to progress from the rank of Harmless (all new pilots are classified as this) to the ultimate macho status symbol of Elite pilot. Doing so, however, is not just a case of blowing innocent spacecraft out of the sky, to upgrade your kill rate (and therefore your combat rating). The Galactic Co-operative Of Worlds (GalCop) is a big organisation, controlling eight galaxies and some 2,000 planets, and the entire place is swarming with danger in the form of pirates, bounty hunters and aliens. Achieving the rank of Elite can only be accomplished in a much more subtle manner...

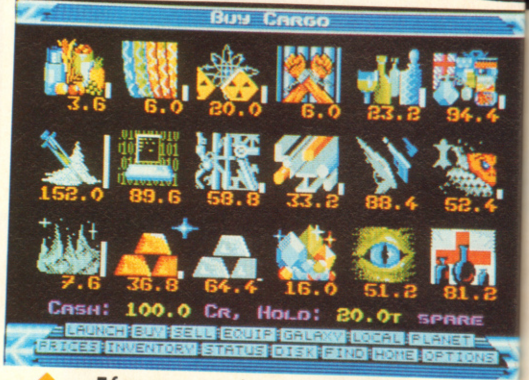
Your career begins docked in a Coriolis space station in orbit around the planet Lave, with a spanking new Cobra Mk III spacecraft, 100 credits and a full tank of fuel. After contemplating this rather low amount of money, you can set about making some more by the means of InterGalactic trading. Trading is a simple way of earning a few bob, but one that is rather time consuming. If you learn to trade astutely, you can buy much-needed additional equipment for your ship. Extra weaponry is expensive, but a formality if you are to survive very long in the alien-infested space lanes. Your Cobra has four separate viewing windows – front, rear, left and right – and each one can house a laser weapon. Initially, however, only the front view-screen is armed, and then only with a relatively weedy pulse laser. More powerful (and more expensive) weapons can be purchased once you've earned enough cash to pay for them.

Trading between worlds involves simply buying goods from one planet at a low price, travelling through hyperspace to another planet, docking with their space station (the centre of all trading and commerce for a planet) and selling your wares at a profit. Problems arise when space pirates spot you on your way to a planet with a hold full of merchandise. This is where space combat comes in, a hefty slice of the proceedings. Your ship is equipped with two plasma shields capable of deflecting laser blasts. Each time they take a hit, they are depleted, and when they hit zero you can kiss goodbye to your ship, your career and your life. Fortunately you can give as good as you get, thanks to your laser and missile systems. Repeated hits with a laser cannon should destroy an enemy ship (depending on its class) while missiles are far more accurate, usually able to knock out a ship in one hit with no fuss (unless the missile's target happens to own an ECM shield!).

Combat is not just restricted to bounty-hungry pirates though. Aliens in the form of the deadly insectoid Thargoid warriors also pose a huge threat. They attack without mercy, and usually in large invasion fleets that are almost invincible. Fortunately they don't appear too often. The police can be a problem, too. They usually leave you alone, but if you do something stupid like trade in illegal merchandise or open fire on a space station, a squadron of Vipers will be onto you before you know it.



As you approach the coriolis space station, a Viper exits to check you out. Pray you're not carrying any dodgy cargo.



Buy Cargo

3.6 6.0 20.0 6.0 23.2 94.4

152.0 89.6 58.8 33.2 88.4 52.4

7.6 36.8 64.4 16.0 51.2 81.2

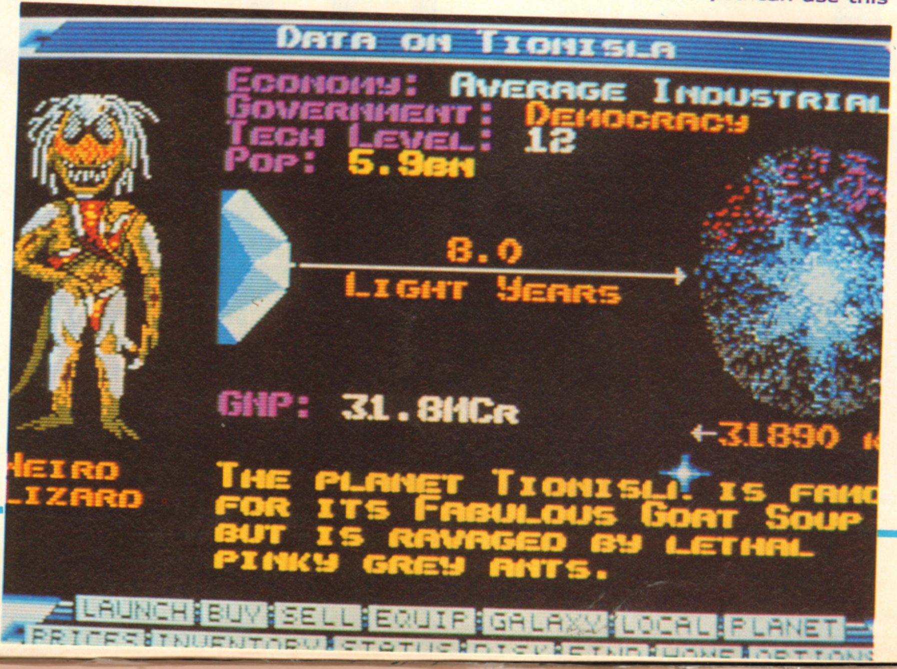
Cash: 100.0 Cr, Hold: 20.0t spare

LAUNCH BUY SELL EQUIP GALAXY LOCAL PLANET
PRICES INVENTORY STATUS DISK FIND HOME OPTIONS

If you want to buy some merchandise, here's the place to do it. Note the flashy new icon systems. Food is a good buy but stay away from the firearms if you don't want the intergalactic Sweeney on your back.

TRADING PROBLEMS

Making money through trading isn't as easy as it may seem. One of the major problems is that the Coriolis space stations are not allowed to transmit their buying and selling prices outside of their own system, which means you don't know how much you can sell your merchandise for until you've actually jumped into that particular system. If you're lucky, you can sell at a profit, but if you're *un*lucky, you'll be forced to sell at a loss if only to be able to buy enough fuel to get to another planet. To prevent this, it's advisable to call up information on the different planetary systems beforehand. The data is vague, and will only tell you if the planet is rich or poor, and if it specialises in agricultural or industrial goods, but if you're shrewd you can use this



Data on Tionisla

Economy: Average Industrial
Government: Democracy
Tech Level: 12
Pop: 5.9bn

8.0 Light Years

GNP: 31.8MCr

←31890

HEIRD LIZARD

THE PLANET TIONISLI. IS FAMO
FOR ITS FABULOUS GOAT SOUP
BUT IS RAVAGED BY LETHAL
PINKY GREY ANTS.

LAUNCH BUY SELL EQUIP GALAXY LOCAL PLANET
PRICES INVENTORY STATUS DISK FIND HOME OPTIONS

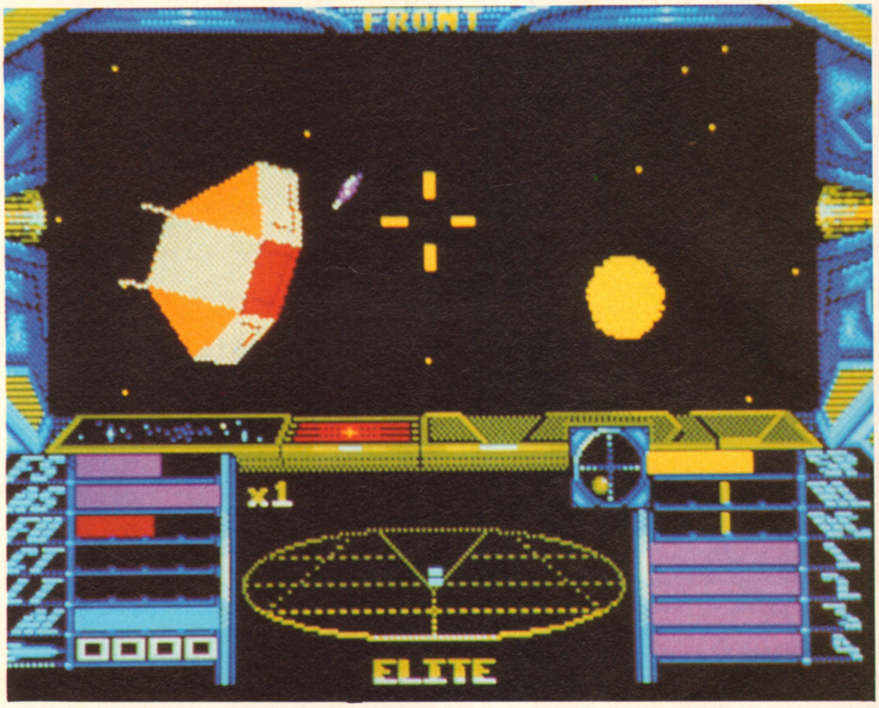
information (along with the tips in the manual) to have a good idea of the market prices.

Trading in food and textiles is all very well, but if you want to make REAL money REAL fast, forget about your principles and start trading in illegal goods such as firearms, slaves and narcotics (the latter item sells extremely well on BenJohnsonia!). There's plenty of money to be made in illegal trading, but the risks are very high. Not only will you incur the wrath of the Galactic Police (who shoot first and interrogate later) but you'll also become the prime target for the many bounty hunters who roam the galaxies, looking for ships of Offender or Fugitive status.

EXTRA WEAPONS

If you want to survive for longer than a few femto seconds, you need to upgrade your ship. A whole host of different laser systems are available, including the awesome Military Laser, as well as Electronic Counter Measure Shields for the deflection of enemy missiles, extra energy banks which allow your shields to recharge more quickly, and a range of non-combative equipment, including Docking Computers, which end the aggravation of manual docking; cargo bay extensions; escape pods for when the going gets TOO tough, and Fuel Scoops, used to pick up cargo canisters left behind by destroyed craft. In fact the only items lacking which would make life complete are the personalised sun strip and the furry dice.

The Data On System option provides up-to-date information on any planet you pull up from the Galactic Chart – a sort of space-age teletext. Without using this, you've got virtually no chance of making any money out of trading and will probably go bust before too long.

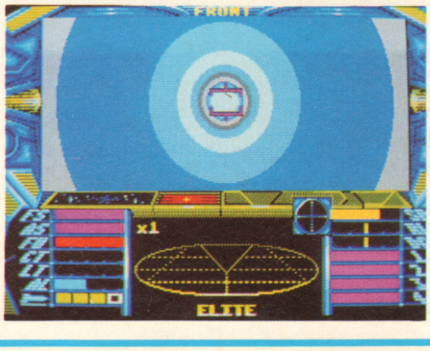


The Wolf Mk II. Just one of the many ships you encounter in Elite**. A deadly craft is this one (and one that doesn't appear in the 8-bit versions – Ha!)**

A

Amiga owners will be glad to hear that Elite is very nearly finished and is due for release sometime in November. It won't look very different to the ST version apart from perhaps slightly faster graphics and enhanced sound. The Amiga interpretation of the Blue Danube Waltz (the docking music for the philistines among you) is being handled by binary maestro Hagar, and is reputed to be brilliant (well that's what Gary Liddon says). Update next month.

Hyperspace – the only way to travel. If you're unlucky a Thargoid fleet will intercept you before you reenter, and the game is effectively over.



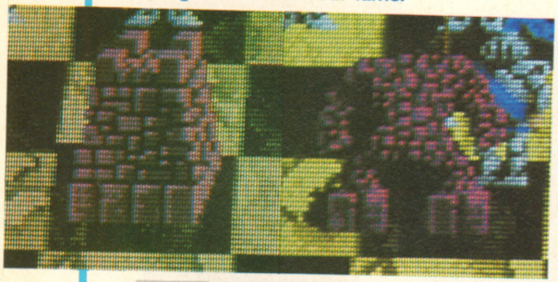
ST

Elite is a classic game, there's no doubt about it, and it has to be said that all the original gameplay features have been retained, and improved in some cases. A rendition of Strauss' Blue Danube still accompanies the automatic docking, as well as making an appearance on the title screen. The conversion from vector to filled 3D graphics has been handled very well. That said, a lot more could have been done graphically, such as a decent parallax starfield and a more suitable cockpit design (the one at the moment doesn't really suit the feel of the game at all). These minor faults aside, Elite on the ST represents a competent implementation of a timeless concept. Despite lacking many of the refinements present in Gremlin's FOFT, such as being able to land on some of the planets, Elite remains almost as playable. But it's FOFT that narrowly has the edge on its classic counterpart.

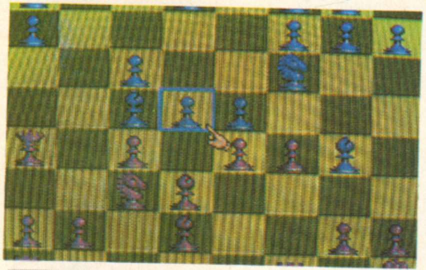
PRICE:	£24.95
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	80%
SOUND	51%
PLAYABILITY	88%
VALUE	84%
OVERALL	86%

Battle

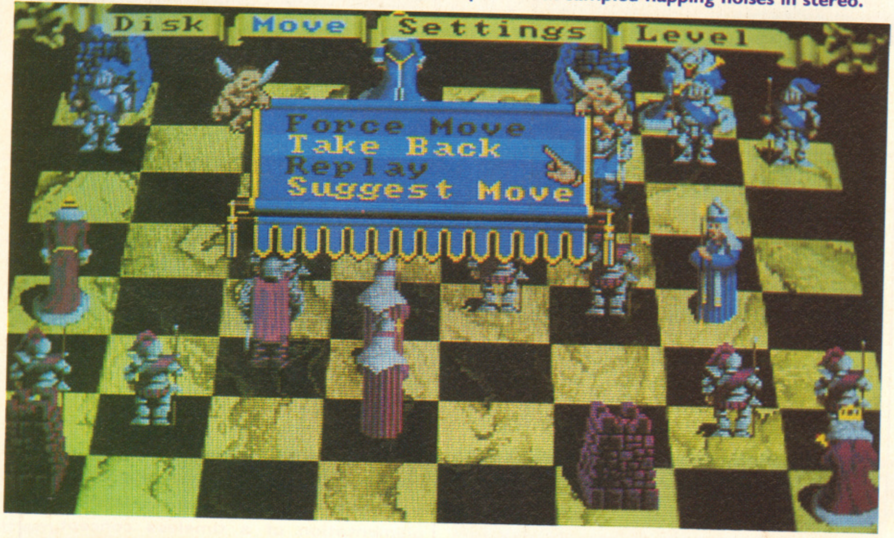
You're in for a shock when you move a Rook. The huge stone-walled castle metamorphosises into a lumbering rockman with glowing eyes, much like The Thing of Fantastic Four fame!

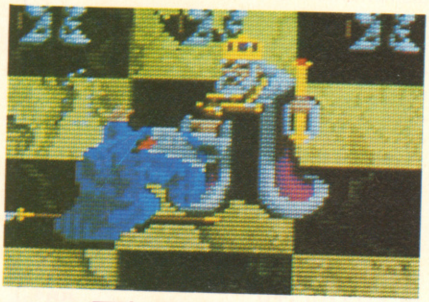


The Two-Dimensional option, for the more discerning player.

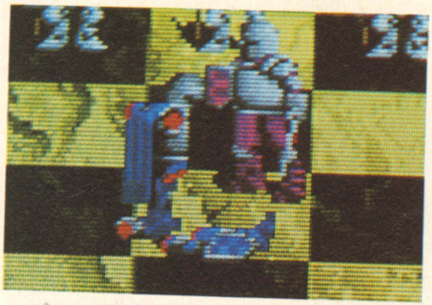


Another neat touch becomes apparent when you access the game options via the pull-down menus at the top of the screen. They come in the form of blue velvet scrolls held aloft by a pair of winged cherubs, complete with sampled flapping noises in stereo.





The King defends himself from the Bishop in his own inimitable style. Out comes the Magnum and bang goes the Bishop's spinal column!

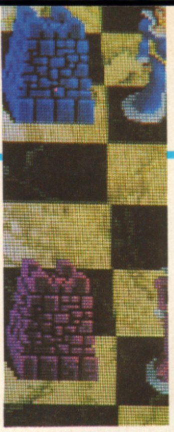


A fight between two Knights. Here we see Red methodically dismembering Blue, arm by arm and leg by leg, with his trusty sword.

In these modern times of such advanced entertainment as 16-bit games, Compact Discs and Neighbours, it is hardly surprising that the age-old game of Chess is all but forgotten (unless you're an intellectual or your name ends in 'ov'). The few binary Chess games that have been released in the past, such as **Chessmaster 2000** and Anco's **Art of Chess** have concentrated more on providing a chellenge to seasoned players than actually making the basic game simply more enjoyable to play. **Battle Chess** is different. True, it's a Chess simulation at heart, but it's been presented in a very original manner – if you remember the scene in Star Wars where R2D2 and Chewbacca play a futuristic game of Space Chess, you should have some idea of how **Battle Chess** works.

The board is displayed in forced-perspective 3D, as are all of the pieces. Bishops really are old men carrying staffs, the pawns and the knights are dressed for conflict in flinting chain-mail, and the king looks particularly regal carrying his official mace and wearing a long velvet train. The attention to detail is marvellous.

Moving a piece is simple enough. A hand cursor is guided around the board, and a square flashes red whenever the particular piece occupying it can be moved. A single click highlights the square, and the cursor then highlights all possible destination squares as they are passed over. Clicking on a destination square moves the piece. A slick animation sequence then follows in which the chosen piece comes to life and walks to its destination square, accompanied by sampled sound effects. Whenever a piece is moved to take an opponent's piece, the standard walking sequence follows until it reaches the target square. The opposing piece on that square then shuffles aside to make room, both pieces limber



Even if the slightest thought of a game of Chess sends you to sleep, Electronic Arts' latest offering is guaranteed to have you on the edge of your seat thanks to its original (and overly violent) approach to the classic board game. Gary Whitta dons his armour and enters the fray...

e Chess

up and a battle sequence ensues. There are plenty of battle sequences incorporated, and the one that is played out depends on which pair are fighting it out. For example, one knight defeats another by chopping off his opponents' arms and legs, in true Monty Python And The Holy Grail style! The Queen has a habit of frazzling her victims with a magic fireball while the King has a range of attacks available, from knocking opponents down with his parliamentary mace to blowing them away with a ·44 Magnum!

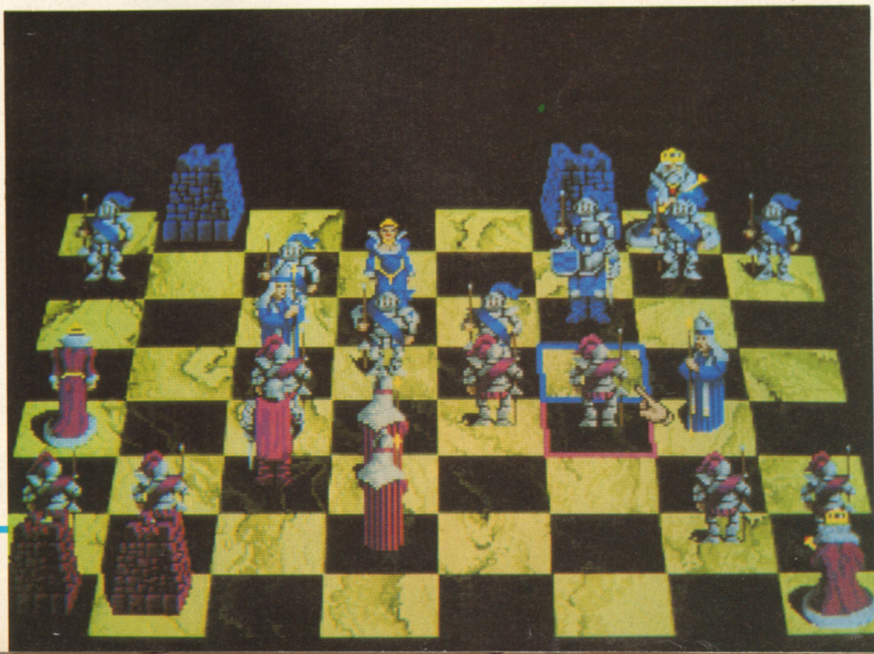
For the more serious Chess player who can't be doing with all these lengthy and explicit combat sequences, a standard 2D option is provided which cuts out all the flashy animation and sampled FX, replacing them with the (relatively mundane) flat display used on TV Chess coverage. There's a host of options, all available in both display modes, including the obligatory One and Two Player modes, 10 skill levels, suggest move, force move, a clock that can be set to a variety of times, the option to set up the board to any connotation that takes your fancy, and there's even the facility to link up and play with another person via a modem!

A Battle Chess is quite simply a wonderful game. Unlike EA's previous effort, Chessmaster 2000, Battle Chess is immense fun to play – even if you're not a Chess fan. This of course, is all due to the fabulously entertaining combat sequences. The first time I saw them, I was practically doubled over in fits of helpless laughter. There is some doubt as to how long it will be before the combat sequences become tiresome, but it's obvious that they inevitably will. But when they do, you can always resort to the 2D option for a spot of serious gaming. The computer opponent is a formidable one even on the earlier levels, and when the timer comes into play, things can get awfully frenetic! Undoubtedly Battle Chess is the best game of its kind on the Amiga, even surpassing Chessmaster 2000. If you're a Chess fan, you should go out and buy this game immediately. If you're not, you should buy it anyway.

PRICE:	£24.95
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	83%
PLAYABILITY	82%
VALUE	78%
OVERALL	**84%**

ST Unfortunately Electronic Arts has no plans for an ST version of Battle Chess. If you wish to protest about this rather sad state of affairs and thus attempt to prompt a conversion, write to EA at 11-49 Station Road, Langley Business Centre, Langley, Slough, Berks SL3 8YN.

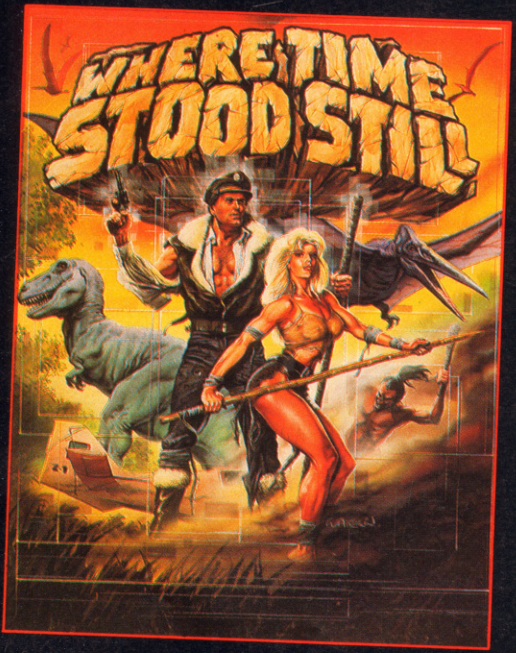
PC Yes, there IS a PC version of Battle Chess in the pipeline, but work has only just started and so you won't be able to play it until after Christmas. Watch this space fo details...



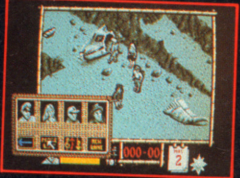
Moving pieces couldn't be easier. The pawn has been selected (indicated by the red highlight) and when the hovering hand is clicked on that blue lined square directly in front, the pawn will strut over to it in time with some metallic clanking effects.

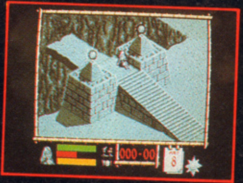
AMIGA
£24·95

FUEL FOR EN


WHERE TIME STOOD STILL

Your plane has ditched on a mountainous plateau somewhere in deepest Tibet. You and your companions are alive. A large shape moves toward you, you rub your eyes in disbelief; a Dinosaur! – where are you ... and when? Stunning, monochromatic 3D graphics and 4 way scrolling, give that '50's cinema mood as you learn not only to survive, but also that your companions are not all they first seemed!





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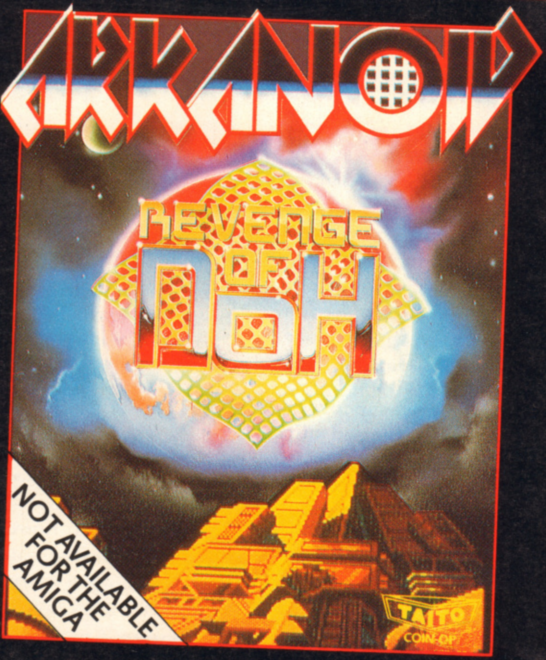
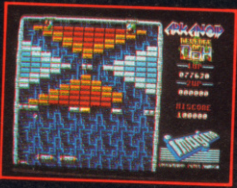
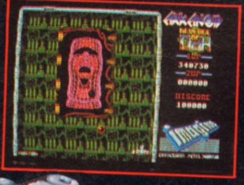

ARKANOID
REVENGE OF DOH
NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE AMIGA
TAITO
COIN-OP

One phrase sums up the success and appeal of Arkanoid – "I'll just have another go!" Arkanoid is addictive! Using all the capabilities of the 16 bit micro this conversion is almost an exact replica with all the excitement of the original Taito coin-op smash hit. This is Arkanoid – the blockbuster.

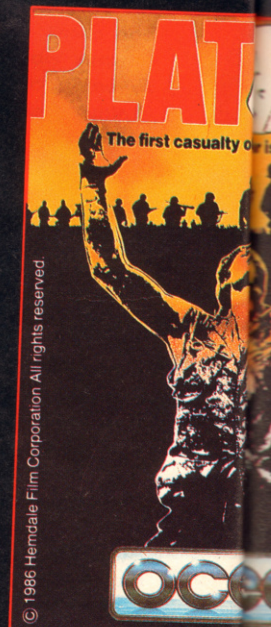




FROM

Imagine

...the name of the game


PLAT
The first casualty o
© 1986 Hemdale Film Corporation All rights reserved.
oce

Exceptional graphics, innovative game design and digitised sound all add up to recreate the atmosphere generated in the box office smash hit. Closely following the original storyline you take your platoon, selecting individual men for assignment, who will encounter the enemy and their many booby traps as you seek to find the enemy's underground headquarters. On entering the warren of tunnels you will need flares and a keen eye – your enemy will lunge at you, from beneath the waters which flood the tunnel floor, wielding vicious knives – the atmosphere itself is enough to kill!

FROM

oce

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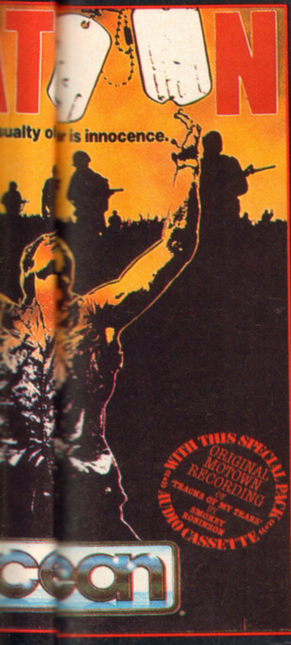
NTERTAINMENT


AT N
sualty o is innocence.
WITH THIS SPECIAL PACK
ORIGINAL MOTOWN RECORDING
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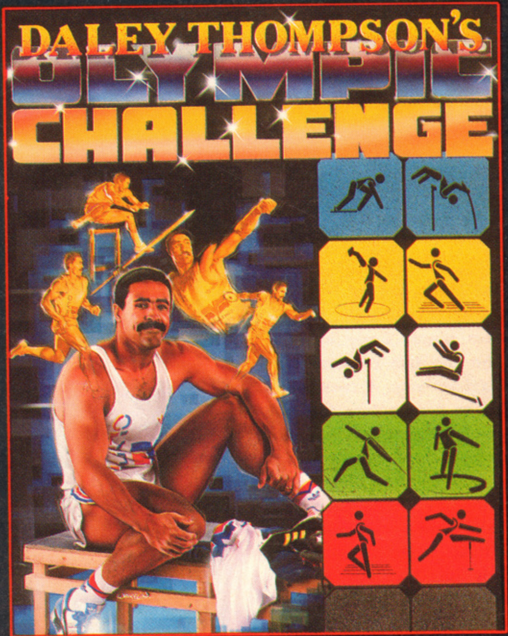
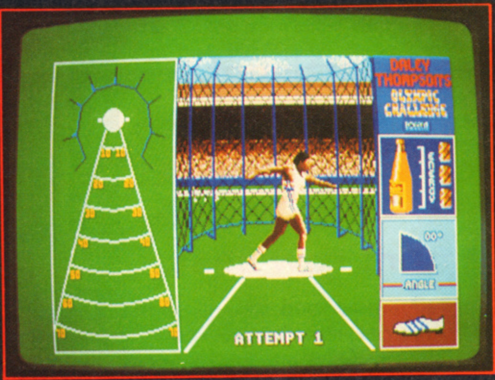
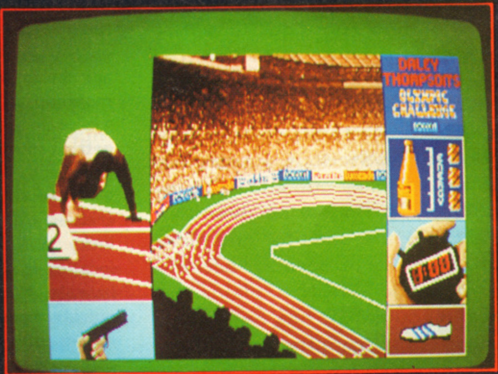
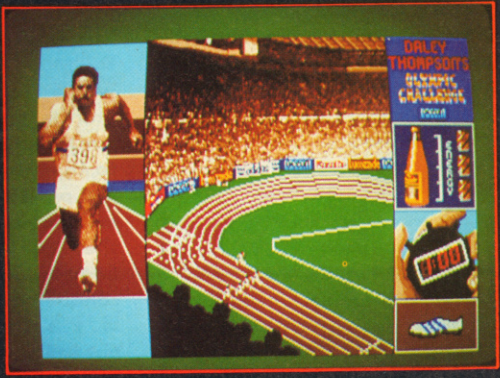

DALEY THOMPSON'S
OLYMPIC
CHALLENGE


DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE
ANGLE
ATTEMPT 1


DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE


DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

DALEY IS BACK Enter the 1988 Olympic Challenge with Daley Thompson as you 'work out' in the gym, where your efforts will directly affect your performance in the competition itself – another first from Ocean.

Ten Olympic events include Long Jump, Shotput, High Jump, 100m Sprint, 400m, 110m Hurdles, Discus, Pole Vault, Javelin and 1500m. You will need all your skills to build on what you hope was, an impressive work-out, and, as is necessary for all top flight athletes, your judgement to select the most effective equipment for each event is now vital – a decision which can win or lose you a place on the podium.

This isn't just another sports simulation, this is a Daley Thompson 'event' where all his talent and humour burst through to make a thrilling and enter taining game play for all the family. Go for the Olympic Challenge!

FROM

OF THE ART

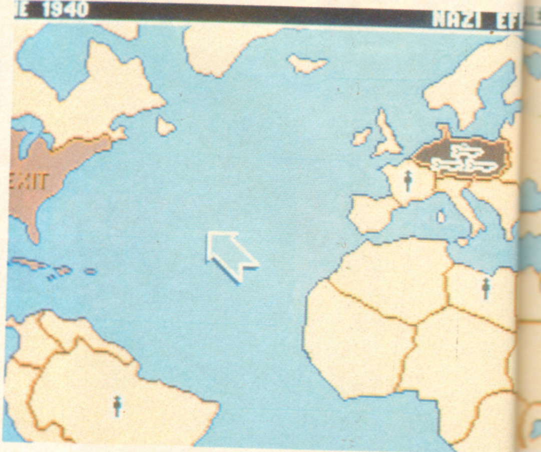
elephone 061 832 6633 · Telex 669977 OCEANS G

Rock

Cinemaware's latest binary epic is a nostalgic tribute to the cult Saturday morning serials of the 1940s and is also possibly their most successful attempt to capture the atmosphere of the cinema to date. Gary Whitta has a front row seat.

The year is 1940. The place, Fort Dix, New Jersey. Special US Army engineer and all-round good guy, Commando Tom Cody is working late one night on an experimental secret weapon when in a deafening clap of thunder and a flash of dazzling light, he looks down to his desk to find a collection of mysterious equipment including a deadly ray gun and a futuristic rocket pack. Pondering over exactly what they are used for and how they got there, he notices an accompanying message which explains to him that the equipment has been sent back through time from the year 2040. It goes on to explain that the war currently being fought against the fascists will be lost and the whole world will go onto be conquered by the Nazi war machine unless Cody can stop them single handedly (with a little help from his new-found equipment).

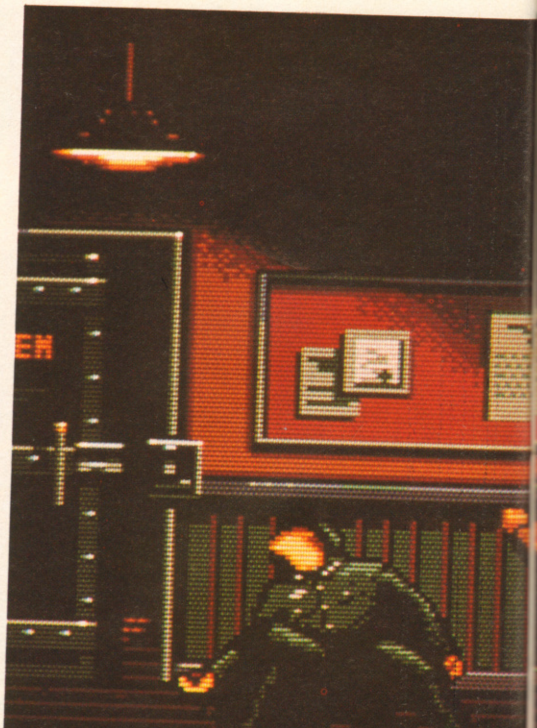
Thus begins **Rocket Ranger**, the latest Amiga blockbuster from Cinemaware. Like many of their previous releases, **Rocket Ranger** is comprised of several sub-games, each one requiring completion before the overall objective can be achieved. Winning the game involves thwarting the plans of the evil Leermeister, a Nazi colonel who has hatched a dastardly scheme to win the war by using a new form of deadly bomb powered by Lunarium, a radioactive substance found only on the Moon.



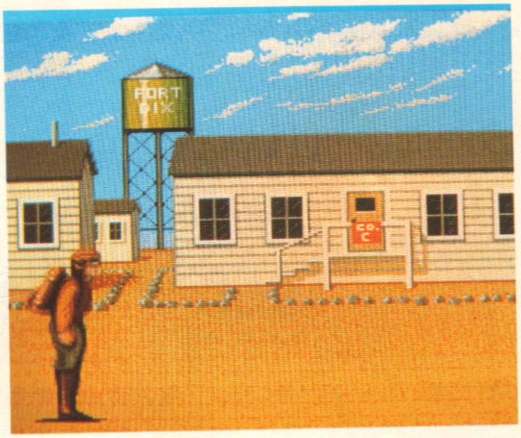
The War Room at Fort Dix is where most of the strategic side of Rocket Ranger takes place. Cody has five secret agents that he can use to scour the world in search of Nazi activity. A cursor and menu system is used to manipulate the five operatives. Agents can be ordered to infiltrate any country at any time, and can also be told to maintain a high or low profile. Those who maintain a low profile have little chance of getting caught, but take time to transmit their findings back to the base. High profile agents work more efficiently but also run the increased risk of blowing their cover. If you're lucky your agents may find a clue to the location of a Nazi installation or even the Nazi base itself. Information has to be gathered quickly though, as if Cody hangs about and spends more than 12 months at the base, he is court-martialled for cowardice and the game is lost.

To get the Lunarium from the mines on the Moon, the Nazis are brainwashing women (since men are weakened substantially when in contact with Lunarium) into mindless zombie-like slaves to that they can be sent to the Moon and put to work in the mines. As soon as the Nazis have enough Lunarium they can launch a deadly zeppelin bombing raid on the United States and conquer the free world as we know it . . . Yes, it all sounds ridiculously corny, but the plot has been deliberately written this way to tie-in with the camp atmosphere of the cinema original that inspired the game – **King Of The Rocket Men.**

To stop the Nazis before they can

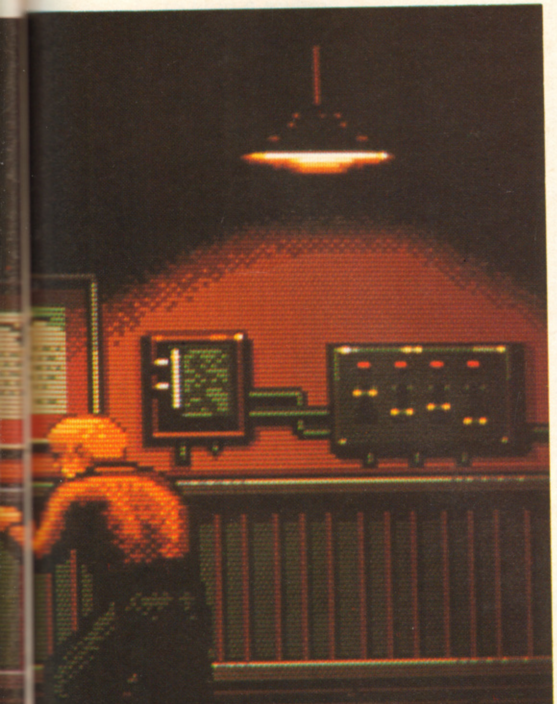


ket Ranger



Most people new to ocket Ranger **won't want to hang about Fort Dix, and will want to get down to the much more exciting business of strapping on the rocket pack and taking off. Unfortunately it's not that straightforward. First Cody has to use the secret decoder wheel supplied with the game to load the rocket packet with the correct amount of fuel for the selected target country. Then it's out onto the parade ground where he can begin his takeoff proper. Cody, showed from the side, sprints across the makeshift runway and the fire button must be pressed to coincide with his footsteps. It takes a bit of practice to get the timing right, especially when the rocket pack contains lots of fuel, but it pays to be patient as three failures costs two valuable months of training.**

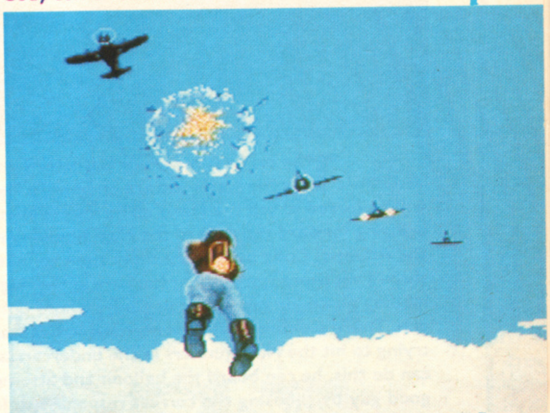
FFICIENCY: 8



realise their dreadful plan, Cody must assemble a space rocket and steal enough Lunarium to enable him to fly to the Moon and destroy the Lunarium mines. Before he can do so however, he's got to locate the pieces of the rocket and capture them while holding back the Nazi war effort.

Finding the different sections of moon rocket is easy enough, but actually capturing them is a different story. When Cody arrives at the newly-found base, he has to partake in fisticuffs with the burly German soldier guarding the precious piece of rocket. Six fighting moves are available, both offensive and defensive, and the action is accompanied by some meaty sampled biffs and oofs. The bars at the bottom of the screen display the energy remaining for each combatant. Should Cody's energy be reduced to zero, he is captured and time is lost. If the fight goes the other way and the Nazi is knocked out, Cody gains access to the rocket room and the stolen rocket section is shipped back to the fort. There are five rocket sections in all, each one guarded by a progressively harder German, the fifth being the 1940's equivalent of Arnie Schwarzennegger

One of the many sub-games seemingly inspired by Sega's Space Harrier, **this mini mission is undertaken when responding to messages from your agents that give details of miscellaneous Nazi activity, such as a secret brainwashing plant or bomb factory. While Cody is flying peacefully above the clouds, he is intercepted by a crack squadron of Messerschmits. Fortunately he can knock out the marauding fighters with his rapid-fire radium gun which unleashes glowing globs of radioactive energy with just a stab of the fire button. The Nazis don't take this kind of hostile action lightly though, and don't hesitate to open fire. Cody's body armour allows him to take two direct hits, with the third forcing him to emergency land elsewhere. Usually the Nazi's efficiency rating drops as a result of a successful mission, buying Cody some much needed extra time.**



LUNARIUM PLANT RAID

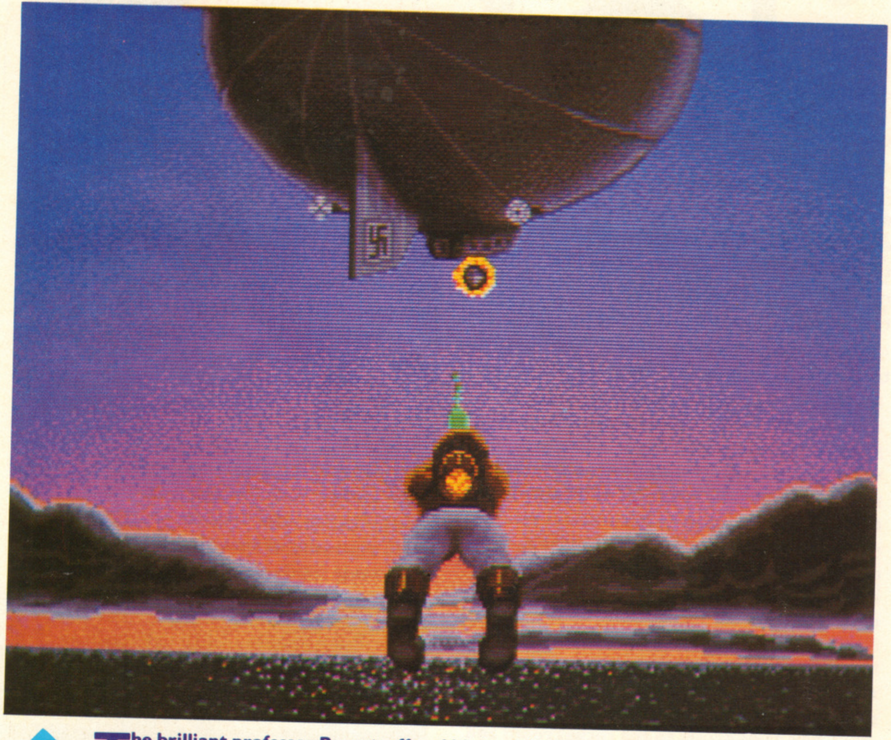
Lunarium doesn't last forever, so it's necessary to replenish your supplies every now and then by raiding either of the two secret Nazi Lunarium plants. Your agents shouldn't have too much trouble finding them (if you put them all in Africa – hint hint). All the targets in this part of the game are ground-based, taking the form of ack ack guns. Cody has to take them all out, only this time targeting is more difficult, as Cody has to allow for his radium bullets to hit the ground and form a puddle which destroys the ack-ack guns. Destroying all the gun emplacements allows Cody to raid the base, filling up his rocket pack and sending any remainder back to the fort for later use.

ARMED COMBAT

A bit of a dark horse this one, as it only appears very rarely, mainly as an occasional substitute for the'ack-ack'game, (especially when the Nazi base is found to be somewhere in South America). Armed once again with his trusty radium gun, Cody takes cover behind a row of bushes in front of a mystical inca temple where the Nazis are holed up. Gun turrets systematically strafe Cody, and it's up to him to avoid or destroy them. The lack of a cross-hair makes it difficult to aim at first, and trickier still is the fact that only the turret currently firing can be shot.

FEMALE LUNAR ZOMBIE SLAVE SHOOT OUT

Very similar to the Armed Combat game, the final battle takes place once Cody has assembled all five rocket pieces, acquired five hundred units of Lunarium and flown to the Moon. Scantily clad in leather hip-boots and studded boob-tubes, the voluptuous lunar zombies slide down ropes before opening fire on Cody. Not only do they attack a lot more frequently, and in greater numbers than their temple-based couterparts, but there is a painfully short time limit. Men are weakened when in contact with Lunarium, remember. That's right, Cody has only a couple of minutes to destroy all the slaves before his vision dims and he passes out under the influence of the Lunarium. Complete the game and . . . well, that's for you to find out.



The brilliant professor Barnstorff and his beautiful daughter Jane have been captured by the Nazis and are on board a Zeppelin *en route* for the Fatherland, where the prof will be forced to tell the Nazis all he knows about Lunarium, thus speeding up its production and bringing forward the date of the Nazi bombing raid. With the Zeppelin currently speeding across the Atlantic, Cody has a very short time to takeoff and intercept it. After the takeoff sequence, there's yet more *Space Harrier* fun here as the huge pink (?) Zeppelin drifts slowly across the screen, lobbing air-to-air torpedoes at Cody, whose only form of defence is (you guessed it) the radium gun. There are three different sections to this stage, and in the last two Cody must concentrate on trying to hit the Nazi gunners in the undercarriage without hitting the huge airbag itself. If Cody can do this, he can board the balloon and attempt to convince the professor and Jane that he's a good guy by choosing the correct responses to Jane's questions from a selection of four replies.

A

Rocket Ranger is without doubt Cinemaware's best game to date. The idea of putting several sub-games together to form an overall mega-game has never been implemented so well, even by Cinemaware themselves. As usual the graphics are absolutely first class throughout. Animation is of an extremely high quality and the brilliantly designed opening sequence successfully captures the atmosphere of the 1940's B movie. Sound, although not quite so good as previous Cinemaware releases is excellent throughout, and what little speech there is works well. In The Three Stooges the separate games didn't hang together that well and the overall game suffered as a result. Rocket Ranger on the other hand manages to pull all the different games together to produce a product which ranks as one of the best Amiga games so far. Wonderful. Not to be missed.

PRICE	£29.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	76%
PLAYABILITY	86%
VALUE	71%

OVERALL 86%

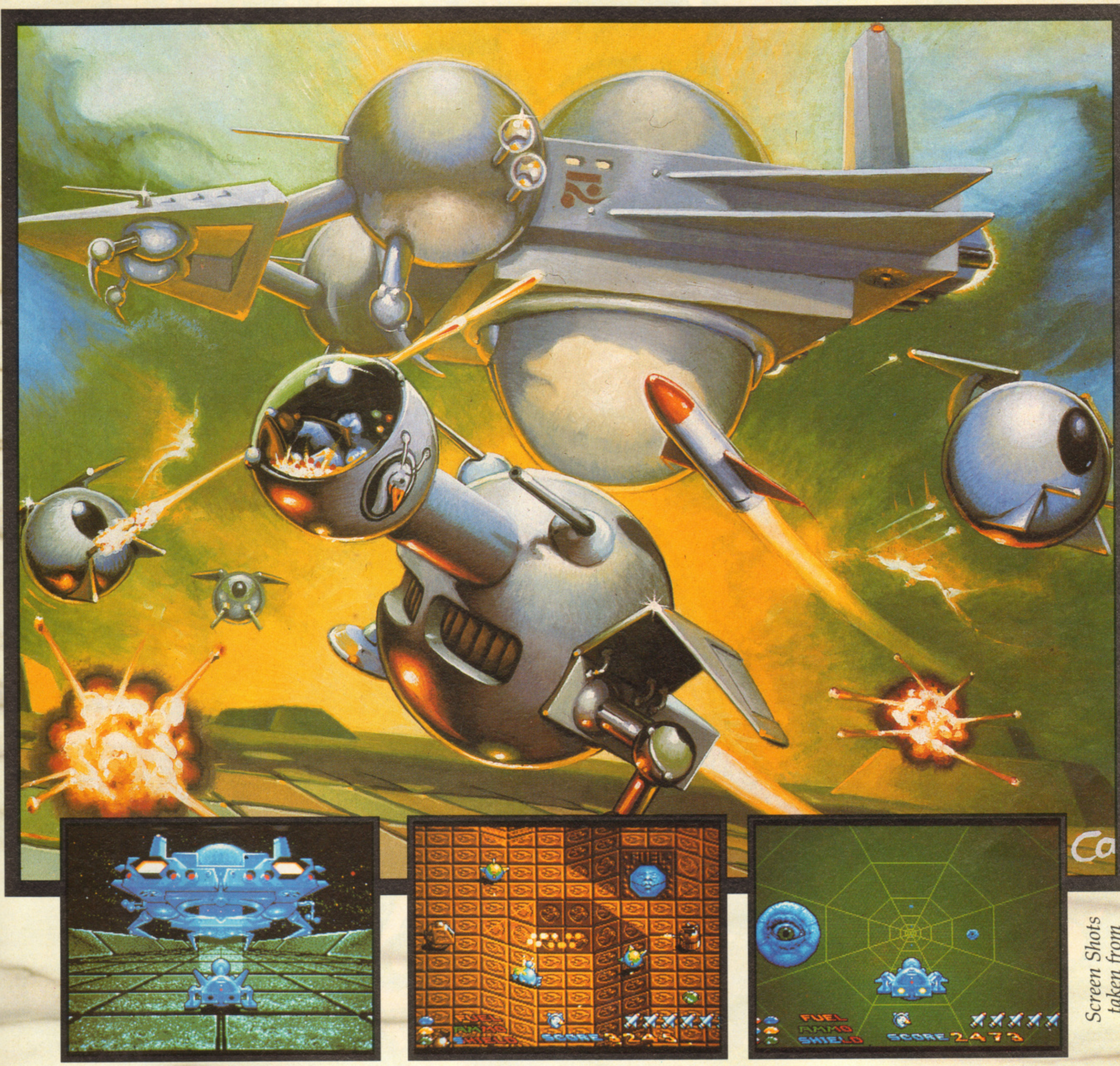
ST

Even as you read this, the finishing touches are being put to the ST version of Rocket Ranger,in time for a mid to late November release. No screenshots as yet, but here at The One we see no reason as to why it should be any different to the excellent Amiga version, apart from any minor colour or music changes.

PC

No doubt PC owners will want to get their hands on a copy of Rocket Ranger as soon as possible, but they'll have to wait a fair bit as it won't be released until next year. When it is however, you can expect to see something special, with Cinemaware keen to provide both CGA and EGA versions

STAR GOOSE!



Screen Shots taken from AMIGA

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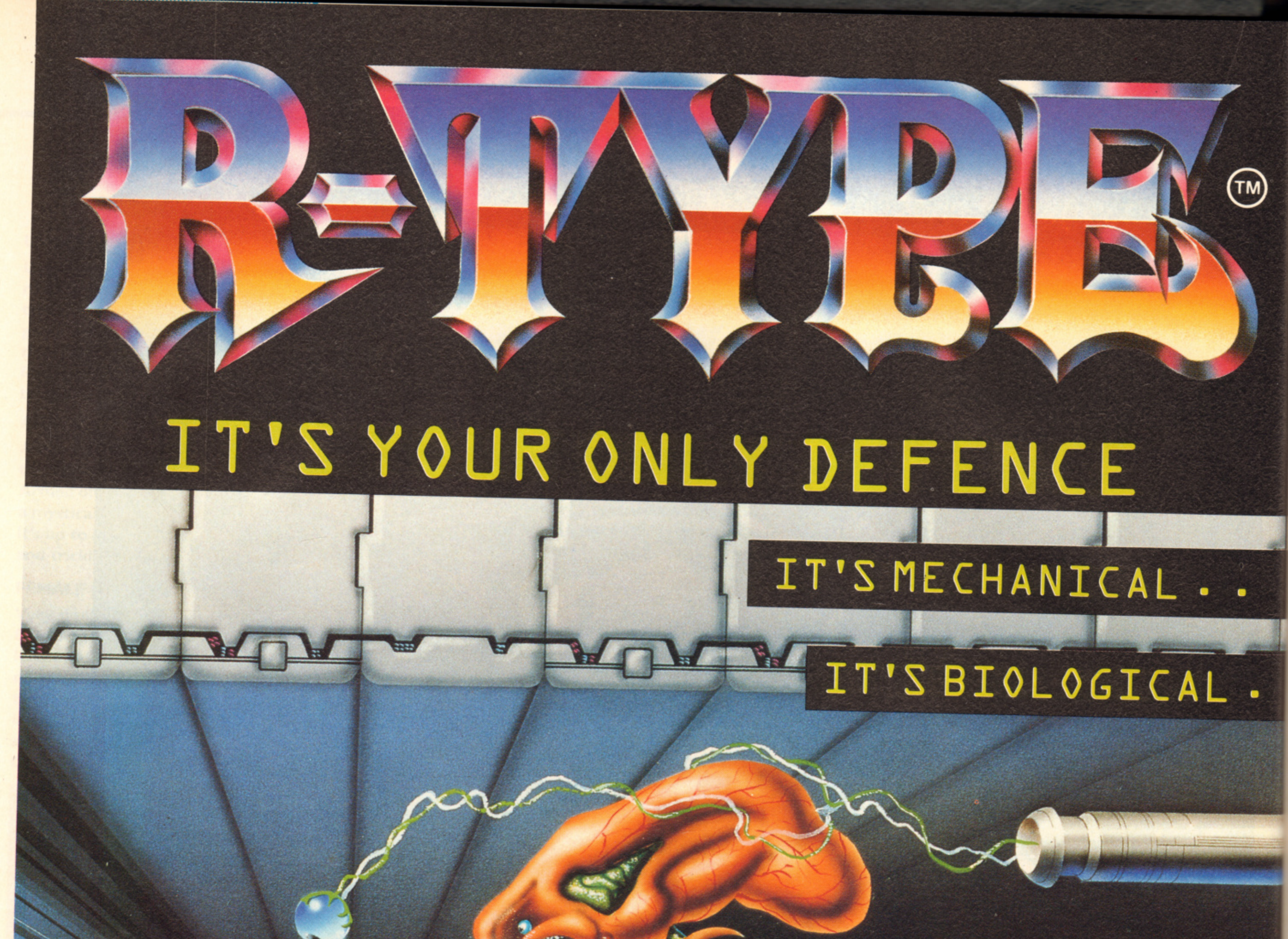
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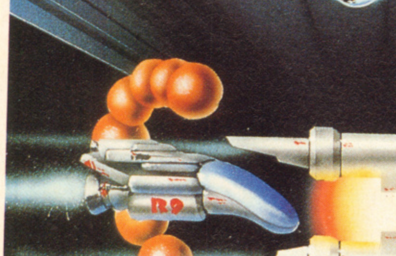
1UP SCORE BEAM
Atari ST screen shot

BEAM
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Commodore screen shot

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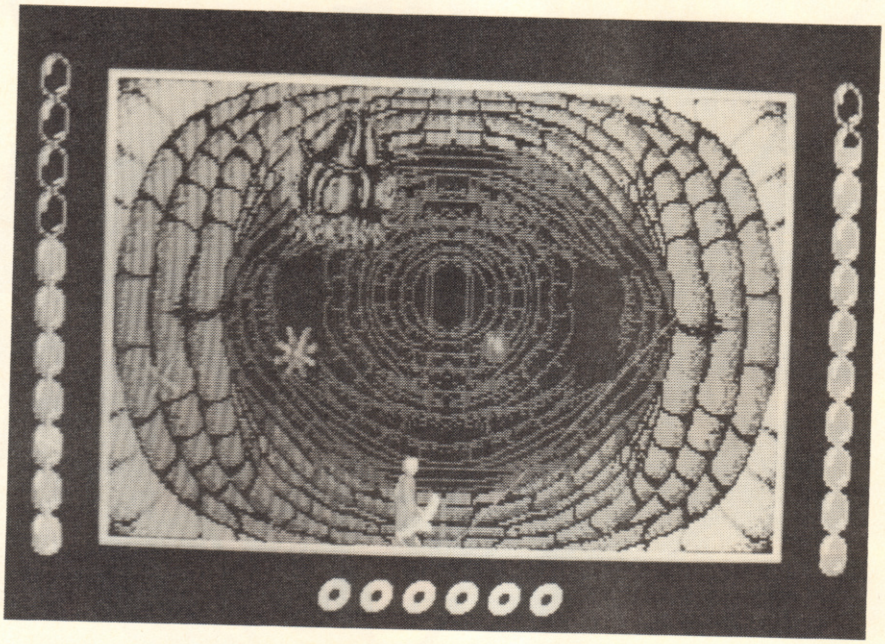
ISSUE THREE ON SALE NOVEMBER 28th DON'T MISS IT

Albedo

A game with a super human deity called Dick? Albedo, the latest bizarre offering from French software house Loriciels has Graham Taylor wondering if something got lost in the translation . . .

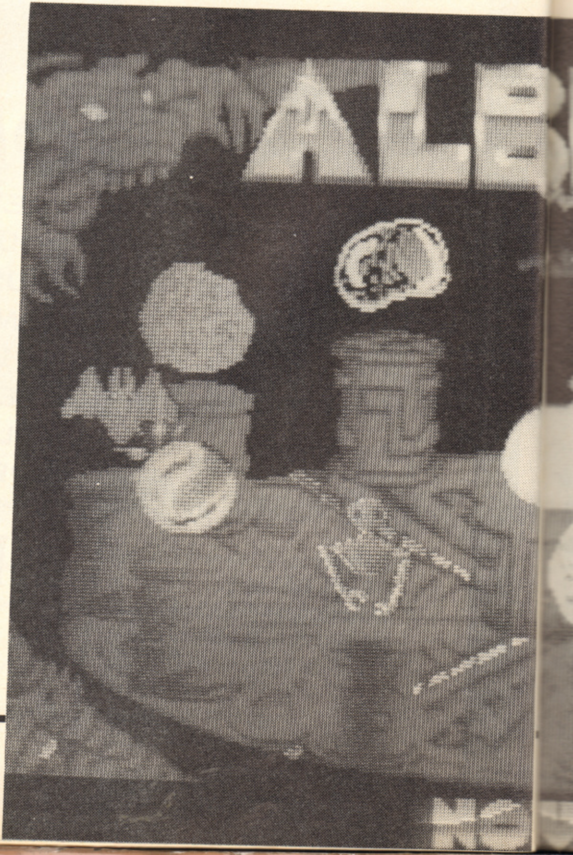


Dick is a hero in magnetic shoes, and on the first level you get to do battle with a fiendish alien monster that looks sort of like a putrid pumpkin. Very threatening. Is it me or is all this odd?

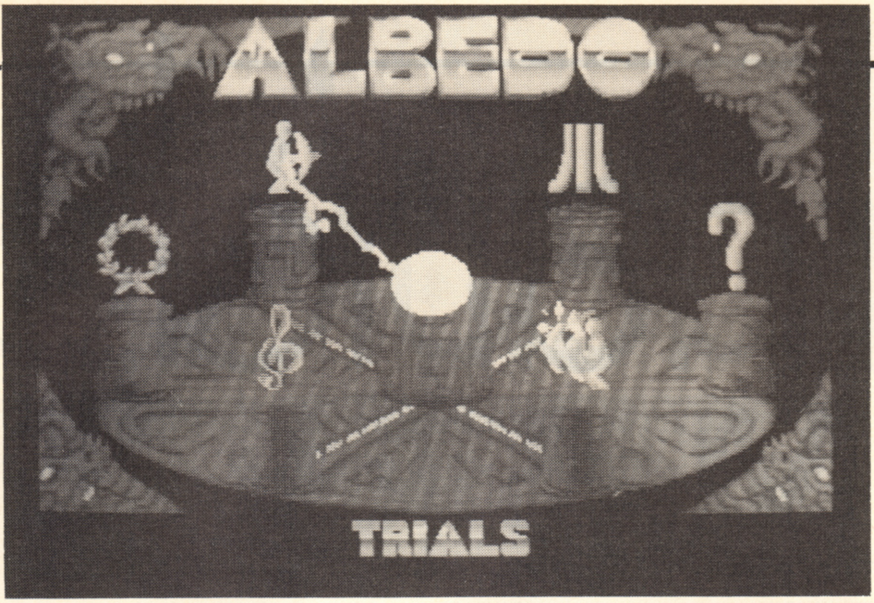
You could easily be forgiven for believing that **Albedo** is actually ten games in one. It could be because when you load it and check out the options screen, which, amongst 20 other things, gives you descriptions of all the plots on all the levels . . . "Fight the star . . ." "Kill the monster which feeds on energy . . ." "Search the maze . . ." and so on. This is an error, the different levels have far more in common than anything else and, in some cases, (such as killing the monstrous green pumpkin monster) barely deserve the title 'level' at all.

Loriciels is a master of the game hybrid, sometimes this works and sometimes . . . **Albedo** is **Asteroids** (a lot) meets **Breakout** (a bit) meets ridiculous plot. Imagine this: you play a hero with metallic shoes that enable him to walk around walls or to jump from one wall to another by a smartish left right motion of the mouse then to drift through space until the other walls' gravity picks him up. To summarise: it's easy to walk around the walls but hard getting quickly from one to another, for example when small pieces of pumpkin monster are bouncing around.

You have a laser and on some levels grenades. Sometimes your supply of laser power is limitless, while on other levels you have to replenish it. Either



▶ **One of the simplistic, samey shoot 'em up screens encountered. The action is almost as interesting as the odd options screen.**



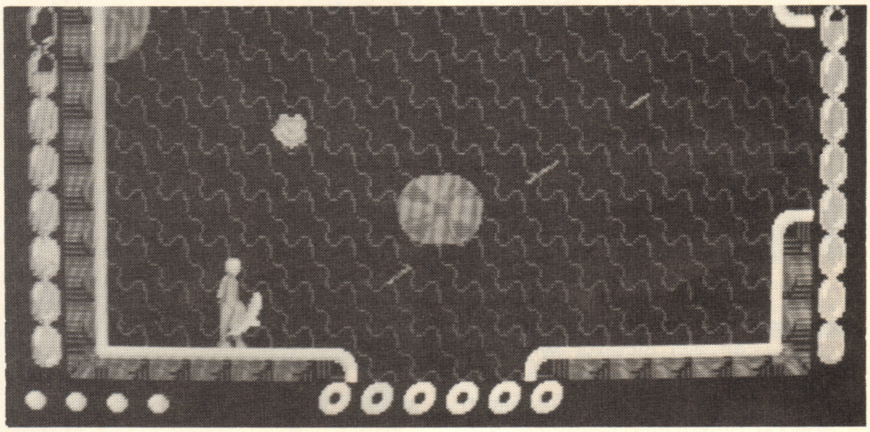
A The Commodore version is nearasdammit identical to the Atari ST Albedo. That's to say, a little bit strange, mildly playable but not very rewarding.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	29%
SOUND	68%
PLAYABILITY	39%
VALUE	30%

OVERALL 41%

way, the basic objective on each level is to reach a minimum score. Get the minimum score on the first four levels and you may select later ones, until (gasp) you reach THE ULTIMATE LEVEL. What will it hold?

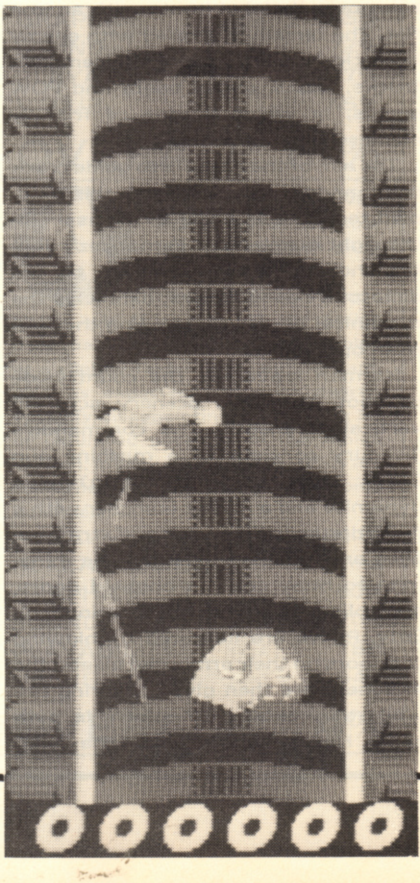
Well if the first batch of levels are anything to go by, it involves moving slowly across the screen, blasting at the bad guys with your laser, watching them break into lesser pieces (just like **Asteroids**) and go bouncing around the screen and into you. Guess what happens then . . . That's right, you run out of energy. Can you get the big score before enough bits of monsters, stars, bouncy ballbearing things, etc, hit you as you drift from one wall to the other?



ST There just isn't enough variety in Albedo. One level has you blasting and blasting at a single monster until you've raked up enough hit points, and another has you blasting monsters and collecting grenades until you've . . . Another has you blasting at stars (?) which split up until you've . . . And so on . . . Either way it's lots of things bouncing around the screen while you try and clank or drift your way from one wall to another. The graphics are somehow colourless and, unusually for Loriciels, just badly drawn. The music sounds like Jean Michel Jarre, which is either good or bad depending on your tastes. I wish I could find something positive to say . . . OK, the options screen is quite nice.

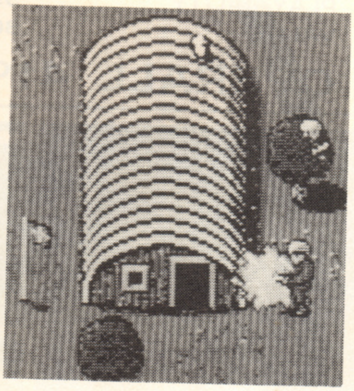
PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	29%
SOUND	68%
PLAYABILITY	39%
VALUE	30%

OVERALL 41%



Fernandez

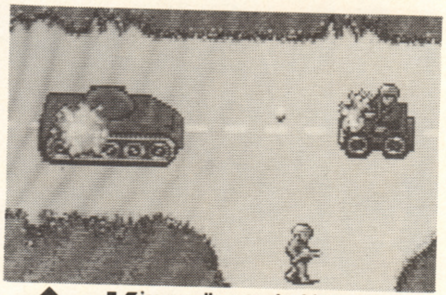
Mirrorsoft's Image Works label continues its attack on the 16-bit front with a shoot 'em up in the great tradition of Commando and Ikari Warriors. But have we seen it all before? Steve Jarratt goes in for the kill, guns blazing...



The Fernandez of the title is an evil dictator who has recently captured an otherwise peaceful South American country, and rules over its inhabitants with an iron fist. The terrain is littered with enemy barracks, machine-gun emplacements, trucks, tanks, patrol boats and POW camps, in which hordes of friendly soldiers are incarcerated.

The aim of the game is to guide crack commando Harman through this occupied territory, in order to assassinate the eight members of Fernandez's Junta, and ultimately progress to the dictator's headquarters, defeating the tyrannical despot and freeing the land from oppression.

Harman traverses the countryside on foot, with the scenery scrolling vertically beneath. The commando's armoury consists of a machine gun (with unlimited ammunition) plus dynamite and a rocket launcher with a limited supply of rockets. Extra supplies are obtained by using the dynamite to blow open stronghold doors, and collecting the stores therein. Similarly, POWs are liberated by blowing the doors on their armoured billets; the prisoners are then given covering fire while they escape off-screen. In both cases, Harman should avoid the dynamite blast which destroys crack commandos as effectively as a reinforced door.



▲ **Kiss goodbye to the big green tank . . . Bye bye.**

Occasionally, a jeep appears parked outside one of the local garages, and may be boarded by pressing the fire button or tapping the space bar on contact with the vehicle. Once behind the wheel, Harman cuts a swathe through the enemy soldiers, and can use the jeep's supply of rockets rather than his own.

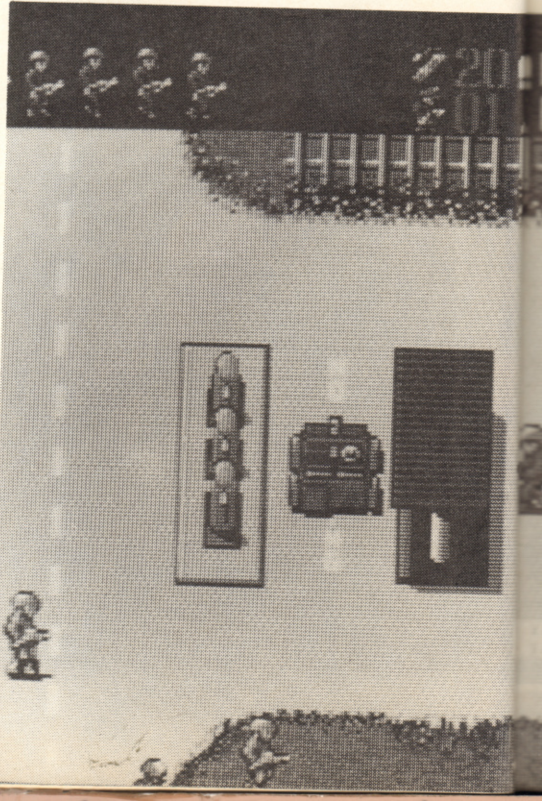
The jeep is not immune to attack though, and after several hits it bursts into flames. Unless Harman can bale out or get to a car wash to douse the fire, the jeep explodes, killing him in the process.

Fernandez's Junta generals are stationed at intervals throughout the land in eight bases emblazoned with red cross symbols. Again, dynamite is used to breach the doorway, after which the panicked officer runs out and can be gunned down for bonus points and an extra life.

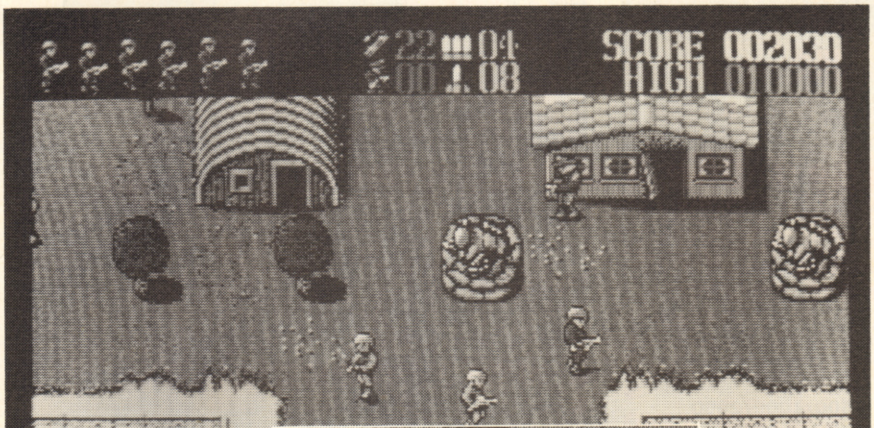
The concept of the Commando-style shoot 'em up is rather long in the tooth, but the only examples of the genre of any merit available for the 16-bit machines are Elite's conversion of **Ikari Warriors**, Microdeal's **Leatherneck**, and **TNT**, from French software house, Infogrames. Compared to these, **Fernandez Must Die** doesn't fare too badly, and the only thing it really lacks is the multiple player option — which to many people is no great loss anyway.

The gameplay is relatively simple,

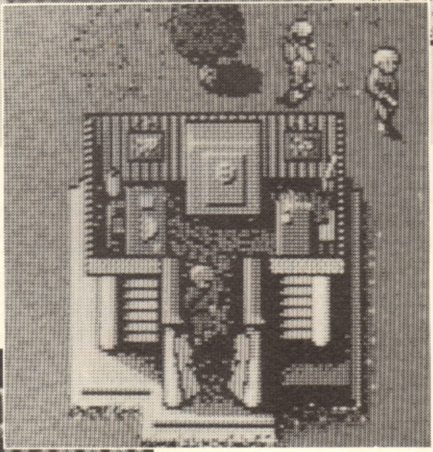
The car wash and garage. If you lost your jeep earlier, there's a flashy new 'F' reg model waiting here to replace it. Not only that, but you can use the car wash on the left to extinguish any fires in the engine caused by excessive damage. ▶



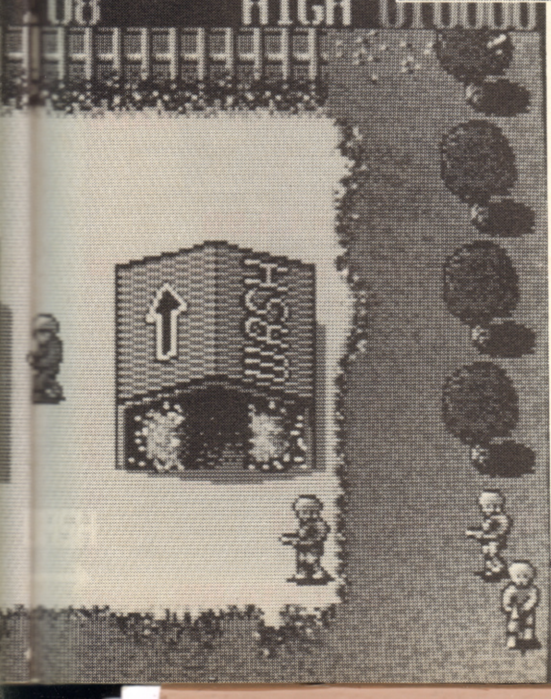
z Must Die



One of the evil junta dictators has been flushed out from his hiding place and is now running about desperately trying to get out of the way of your machine gun . . . which he won't of course.



The house is an invaluable opportunity to gain an extra life. Blow open the door, total the safe with some dynamite, and bingo! An extra life is yours.



but the addition of breaking into storerooms and buildings to collect ammo or free POWs adds a little variety. The assassination of Junta members also provides another twist to the hackneyed scenario.

The scenery and characters in Fernandez have a very pleasant cartoon quality about them (which lessens the impact of the mass murder portrayed), which are uncomplicated, yet appealing and adequate for the job in hand. Mirrorsoft reckons the game is 256 screens high, and would take around 40 minutes to complete. Just by trogging through the landscape as fast as possible. However, a little diversification would increase the lasting interest of the mission, which gets a bit 'samey' after a few dozen screens.

ST The number of characters on-screen, plus the accompanying bullets provide a suitable 'action-packed' environment (even if it does slow down at times), and the atmosphere is enhanced by some clear sampled sound effects of gunfire and death screams. While that is quite effective, there are only four or five different samples – a greater number would have added welcome variety to the proceedings. Scrolling is reasonable, considering the colourful nature of the game and the number of sprites present, and the pace is generally fast enough for the style of play. However I often lamented the slow frequency of the rocket launcher – bearing in mind the considerable opposition provided by gun emplacements etc. In this case, a separate keyboard option would have been welcomed. All in all though, a worthwhile venture for fans of the type.

PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	65%
SOUND	72%
PLAYABILITY	77%
VALUE	65%

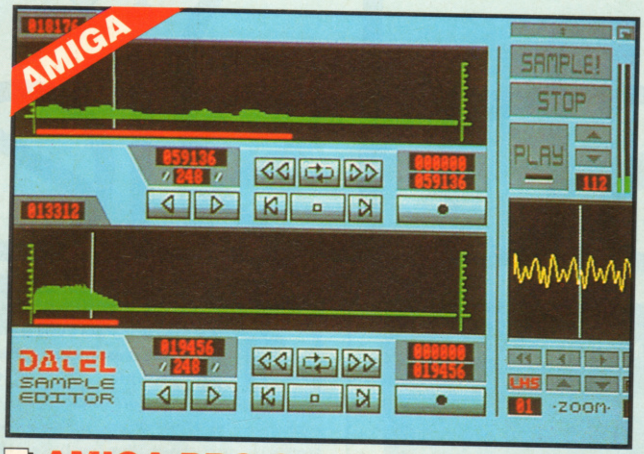
OVERALL 73%

A The Commodore version of Fernandez Must Die is a straight portover from the ST. To this end, the comments above hold true, although the Amiga does manage to keep the action going at a slightly faster pace, and the samples, as expected, are a lot clearer. Possibly disappointing – there is a lot of unfulfilled potential in the Amiga version, mainly where the graphics are concerned but it's still a jolly romp nonetheless.

PRICE:	£24.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	60%
SOUND	70%
PLAYABILITY	78%
VALUE	64%

OVERALL 74%

DATEL ELECTRONICS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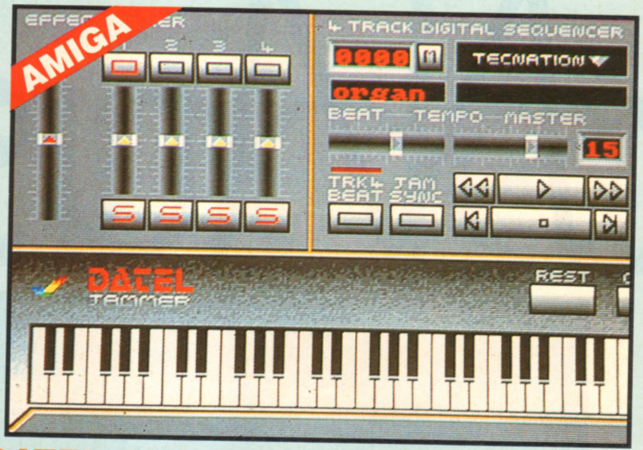
DATEL
SAMPLE
EDITOR
ZOOM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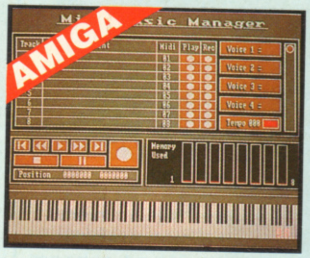
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Voice 3
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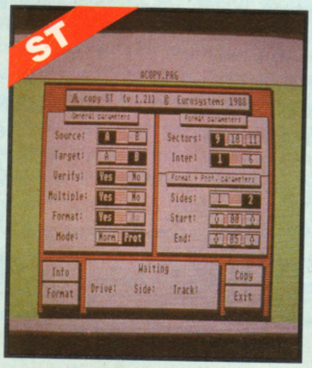
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Multiple: Yes No
Format: Yes No
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Format parameters
Sectors: 9 10 11
Inter: 1 6
Format + Prot. parameters
Sides: 1 2
Start: 80
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Info
Format
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Drive: Side: Track:
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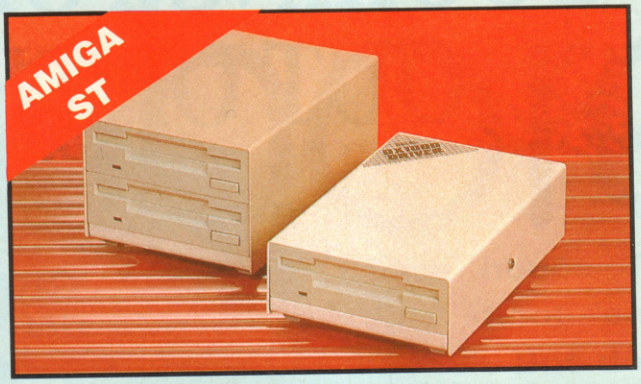

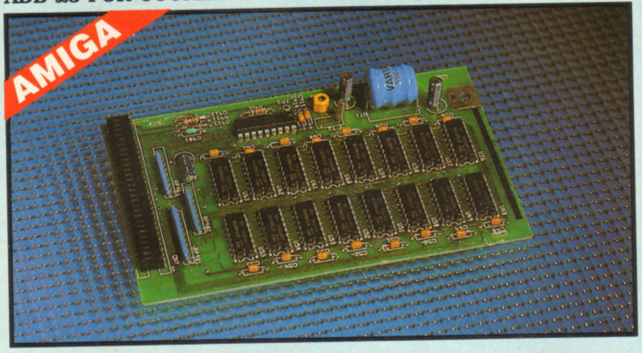

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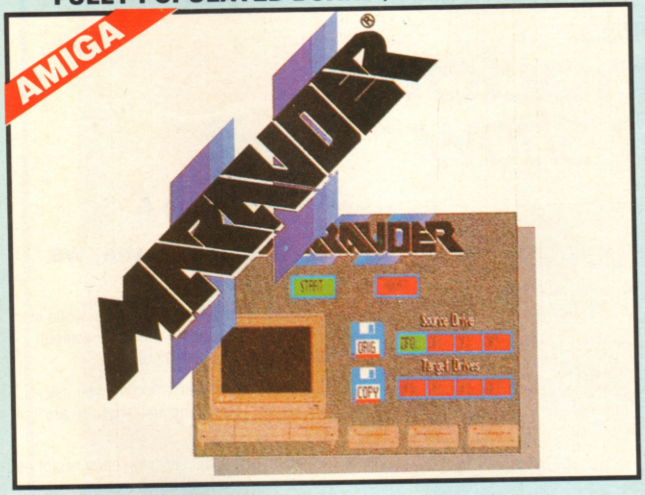

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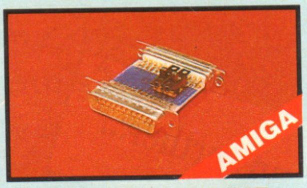

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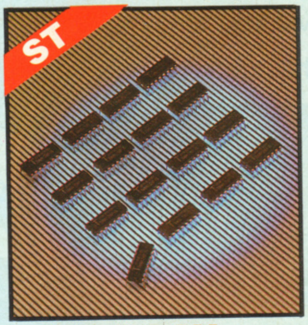

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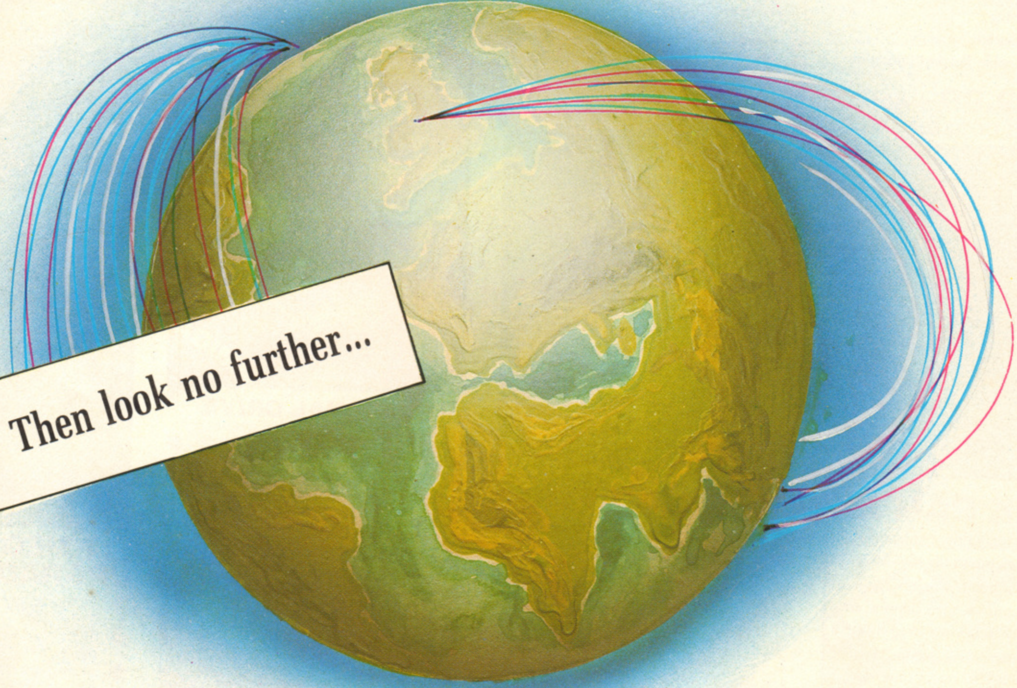
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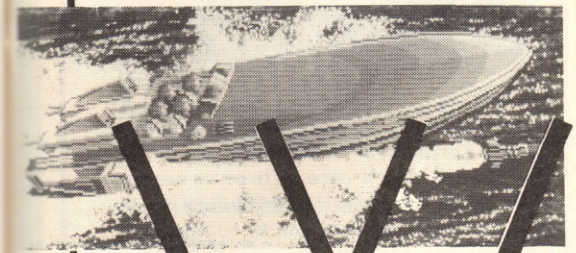
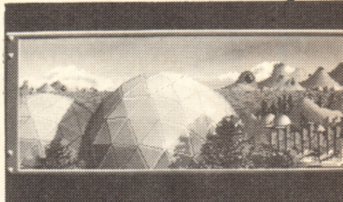
DATABASE EXHIBITIONS

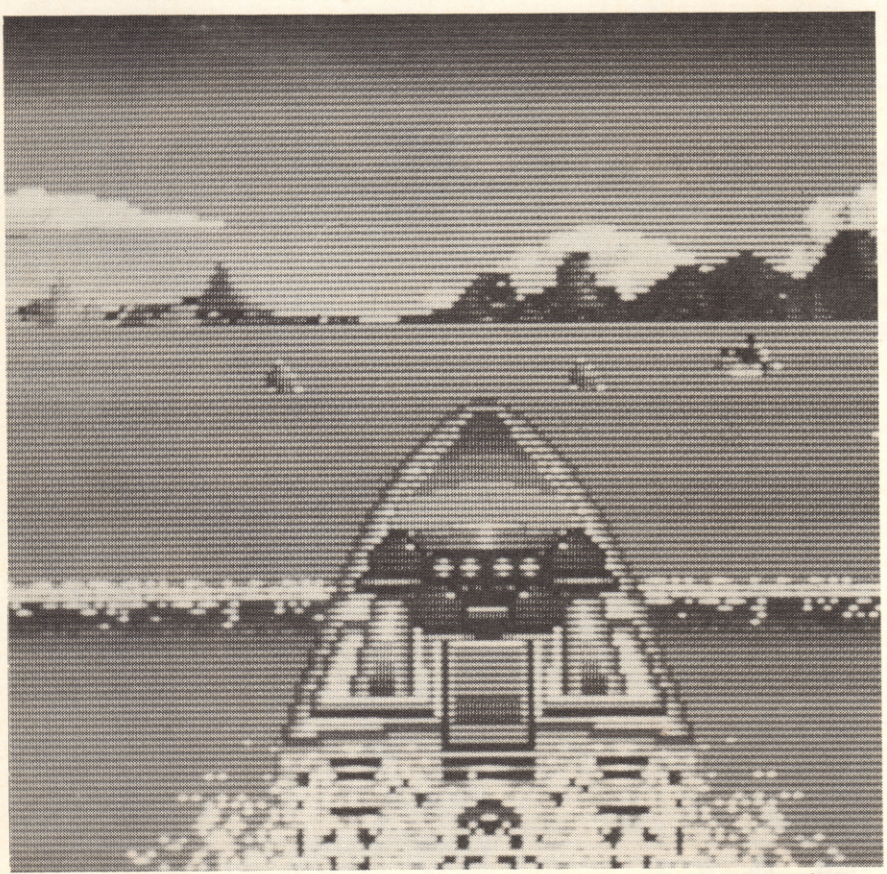
Offshore Warrior



Racy French software house Titus' latest is a futuristic shoot 'em up with an aquatic flavour. But does it offer any improvements over its previous endeavours? Gary Whitta is our man at the poolside...

◆



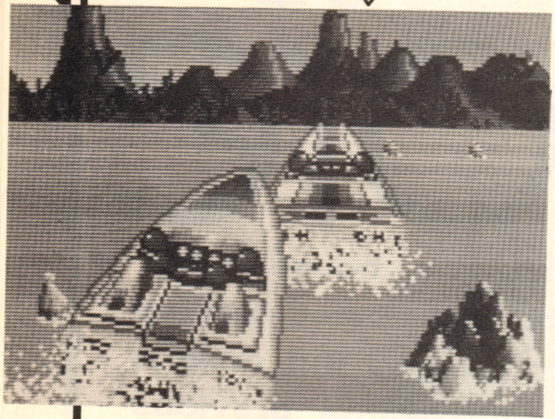


That rapidly approaching ridge of white foam throws your boat into the air when you drive over it. Pretty, but impractical as the boat's speed drops while in the air.

A weak storyline sets the scene for **Offshore Warrior**. The year is 2049 and Earth has been taken over by a race of extra-terrestrials which now monitors and controls all life on the planet. War and violence have been abolished and even sport is kept on a non-contact basis. To provide the action and violence that everyone is longing for, a new blood-sport is devised, where power boats race and shoot their way around aquatic arenas. The combatants in this deadly future sport are the **Offshore Warriors** of the title.

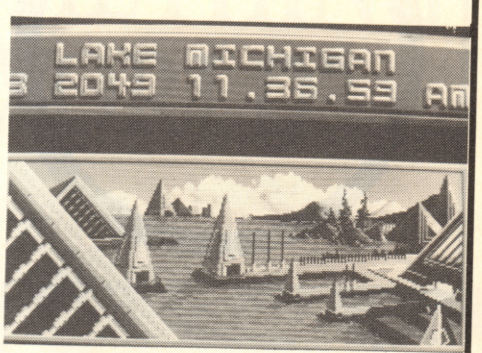
The player is shown the location of the first race, as well as the date and time, before the game proper can begin. The race itself is presented very much in the same way as Titus' previous two exploits, **Crazy Cars** and **Fire And Forget**, ie: you view the game from a fixed position directly behind the craft you control, in this case a high-speed powerboat. Although the race arena is huge in size, only a specifically designated part of it can be raced over, and this area takes the form of a road-like strip cordoned off with buoys. As a further protection against you straying off the beaten track, a series of rocks line the buoys on the outside.

As there are no lives or even a time



limit, the idea is simply to reach the end of each race in first or second position, allowing you to qualify for the next race. To help you do this, your boat is equipped with a missile system. It's not too difficult to knock out opponents, but even so it pays to be careful as missiles are in painfully short supply. Seeing as only two are provided in the first race, the manic blasting techniques employed in games such as **Overlander** and **Fire And Forget** will be of no use here.

Completing a race in first or second position results in a hefty points bonus and progression is made to the next race. The first season starts in 2049 and consists of four races and completing it takes you onto the 2050 season, again four races long. If you manage to complete this season you can progress to the world championships in 2051 and ultimate glory... or failure and death.



ST Offshore Warrior on **ST** isn't much different to its Amiga counterpart. The colour is much the same, with the odd minor sacrifice here and there, and the sound effects are also similar. All the faults, such as the repetitive gameplay and juddery graphics are still evident, and when these are taken into account, it's fair to say that Offshore Warrior offers no significant improvement over the Amiga version.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	40%
SOUND	50%
PLAYABILITY	46%
VALUE	32%

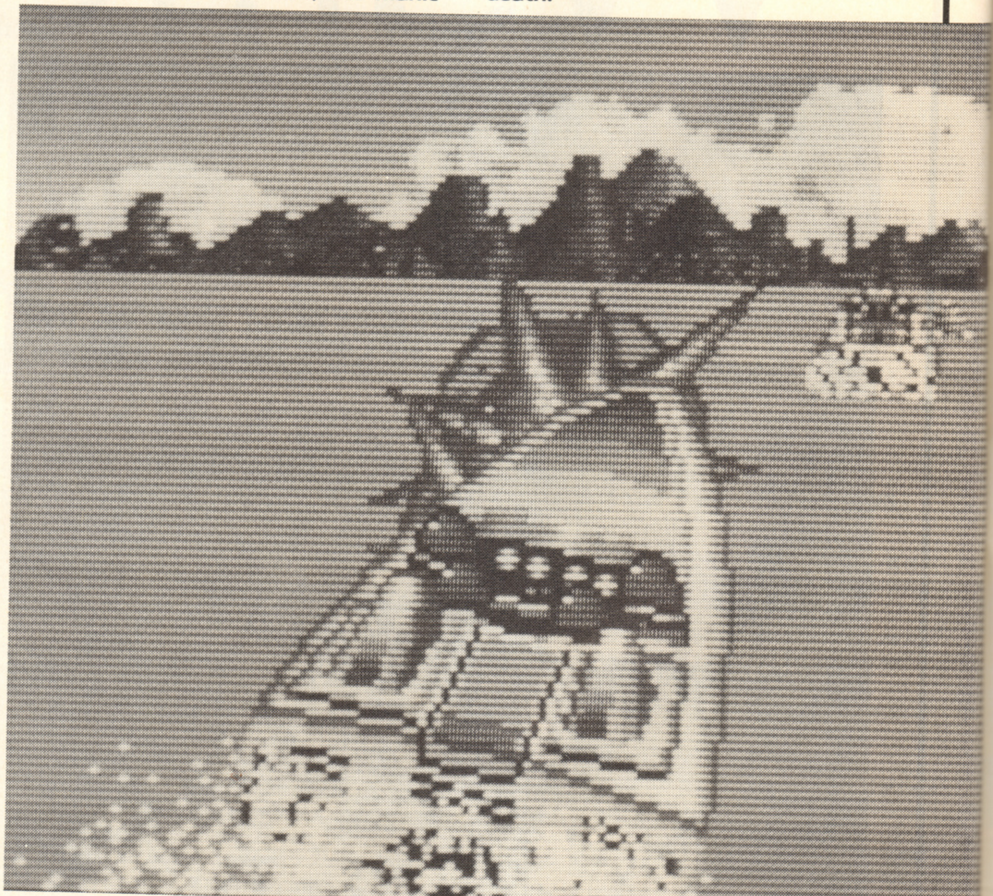
OVERALL 41%

A Graphically, Offshore Warrior fails to impress. The different backdrops are reasonably well defined, but move clumsily, as do the objects in the water, and the boats are very badly drawn. Sound is on the same mediocre level as the graphics, consisting of little more than a dull title screen tune and uninspired in-game effects. As a direct result of the poor aesthetics the gameplay suffers quite badly, and the whole experience becomes rather mundane and tiresome. A shame really, as the idea of taking the standard Roadblasters format and giving it an aquatic theme is one with plenty of potential. Unfortunately Titus has failed to provide sufficient thrills and spills with Offshore Warrior.It's marginally more entertaining than their previous releases, but there's still a distinct lack of engrossing action to enthral for any great length of time.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	40%
SOUND	51%
PLAYABILITY	46%
VALUE	30%

OVERALL 41%

PC Unfortunately we weren't able to get hold of a PC version in time to review it properly this issue, but it certainly doesn't look too bad at all and might just turn our to be the best version of the lot. Update next month.



An opponent's boat bites the dust as one of your high powered missiles rams into it. Not only do you receive a porky points bonus for the kill, you don't have to worry about overtaking him!

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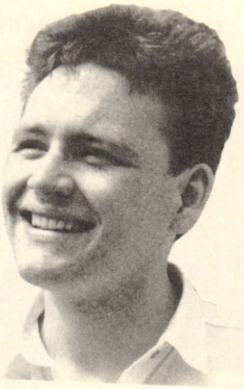

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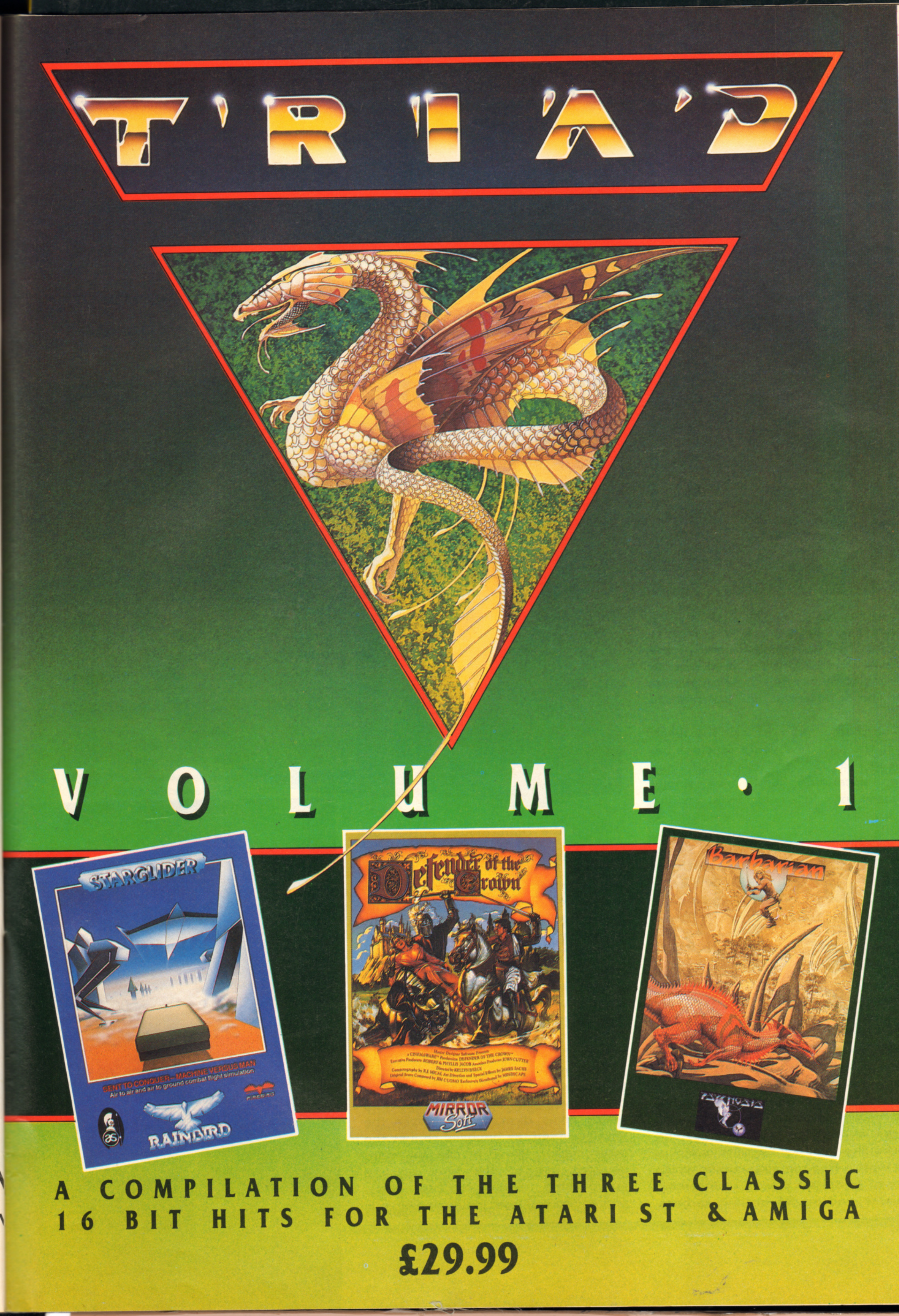
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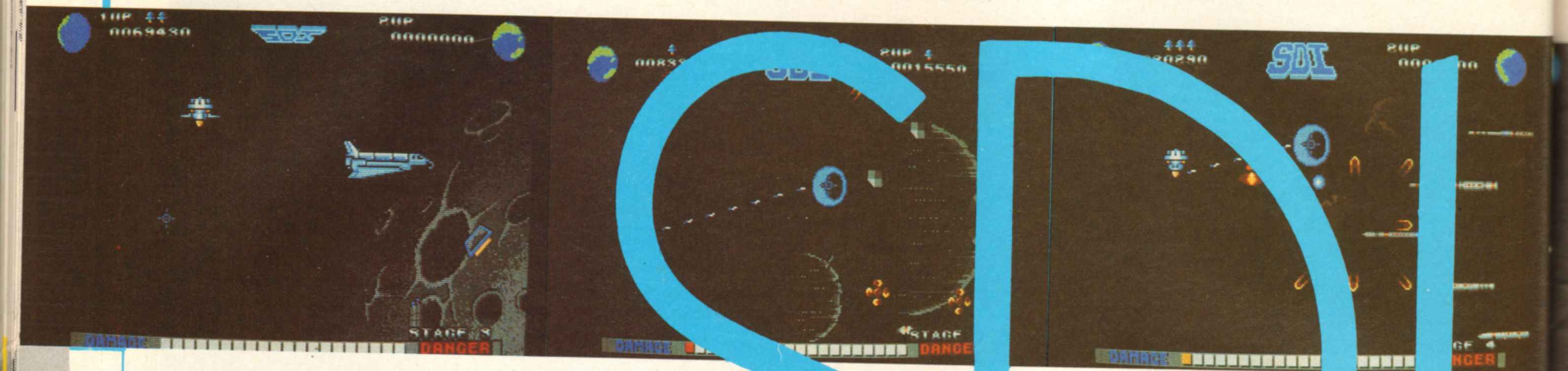
SDI



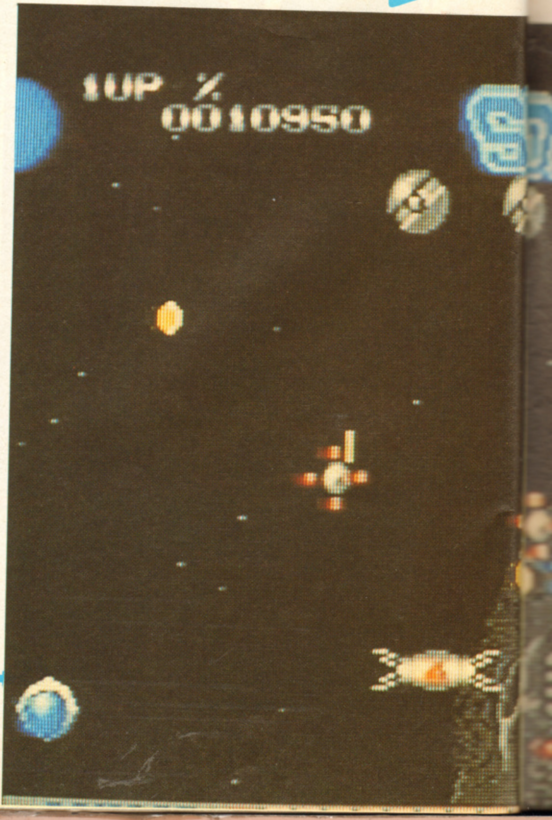
Dear old Ronnie Reagan would be overjoyed if he got wind of what Activision's latest Sega coin-op conversion is all about. Like the original arcade version, it's based on the controversial Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) project. Reagan's idea of putting laser satellites and orbiting missile launchers into space may not be the best way to ensure the long-term survival of the human race, but when it comes to writing computer games, it's a subject with great potential, and **SDI** realises it.

The plot is grim to say the least. Over the past few years tensions between the USA and the USSR have been escalating, and have finally erupted into full-scale global conflict (eek!). The Soviets, nasty little red creatures that they are, have launched a massive missile on the United States and the only way to stop it and save peace, justice and the American way is to put into action Ronnie's pipe dream, SDI, and knock out the missiles before they can enter the atmosphere.

Select the number of players and the game begins with a neat opening sequence. A US space shuttle flies on screen from the left, opens its bay doors and ejects a satellite before exiting to the right. Control of the satellite is then handed over to the player.

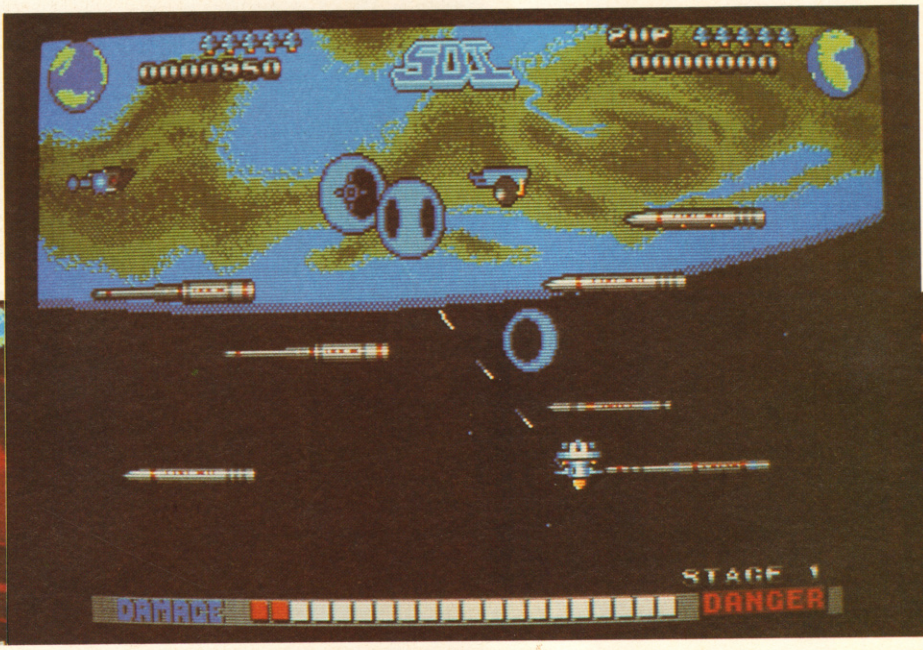
The screen scrolls from left to right over a series of picturesque and suitably 'spacey' backdrops. The satellite is controlled by using either the mouse or the joystick (or both at once) and works like this: the satellite is equipped with a free-roaming cursor which is used to target waves of incoming enemies and soviet ground targets. Hitting the right mouse button will then fire the satellite's lasers.

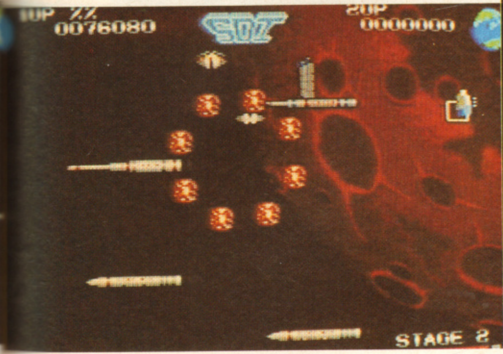
Soviet weapons come in many shapes and sizes, the most common being the waves of concoming nuclear missiles. Fortunately they travel quite slowly and are easy enough to pick off; what's more they can't damage the satellite if they hit it. Missile support troops are a different story. These pods, spaceships, probes and all manner of futuristic space weapons don't hesitate to open fire or even crash into you at the earliest opportunity. There are two ways to deal with them; either shoot them before they shoot you or hold down the left mouse button, which gives direct control over the satellite itself, as opposed to just the laser cursor. Now it can be manoeuvred out of the way of any approaching nasties or laser bolts, preventing you from losing one of your



In orbit around mother Earth on Stage One. Better waste those missiles before they exit to the left and cause some serious damage.

Game Over! Your satellite explodes into a ring of fireballs, allowing a fleet of Soviet missiles to pass. Lucky you're dead, son 'cos now you've no home to go to...





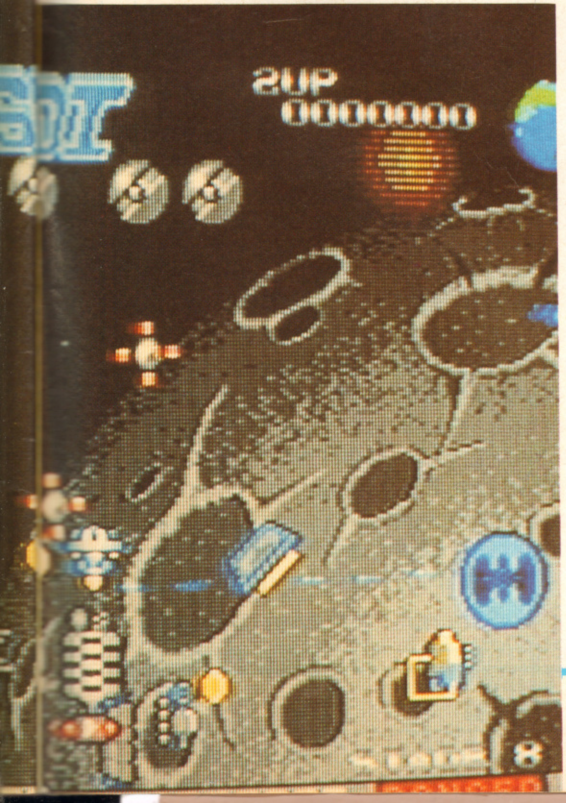
precious lives.

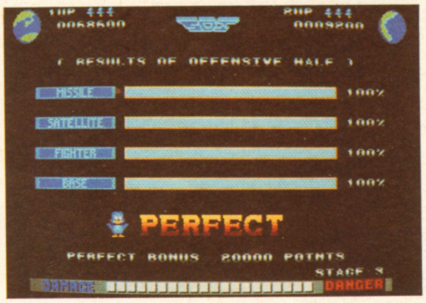
To help you on your mission, enemy satellites appear from time to time bearing weapons capsules. Destroying the satellite results in the capsule being released, and can be collected by flying over it. By collecting the capsules, the satellite can gain extra speed, more missile cursors and increased firepower.

The aim of this part of the game is to knock out as many of the marauding missiles as possible. If the player fails to destroy them all and lets some pass by, they reach their United States target. At the end of the stage the satellite is retrieved by the shuttle and a graphical representation shows the amount of each type of nasty destroyed.

If any missiles are let through, the player must go onto the second phase before he can complete the level. Here the satellite is positioned above a floating space platform and must defend it from yet more incoming missiles which shoot upwards before peaking and slowly floating down towards the platform, causing more damage. Shooting them is again a matter of targetting them with the laser cursor, and the satellite can still be moved to avoid the other swirling nasties that appear, who are this time even nastier. Shooting them turns them into yellow/red ion storms that float off in random directions, destroying the satellite if they come into contact with it. Once the attack wave

It's Level Eight and things are really hotting up. The satellite is surrounded and unless something is done pretty quickly death will soon follow...





1UP 444
0068600

2UP 444
0009200

(RESULTS OF OFFENSIVE HALF)

MISSILE 100%
SATELLITE 100%
FIGHTER 100%
BASE 100%

PERFECT

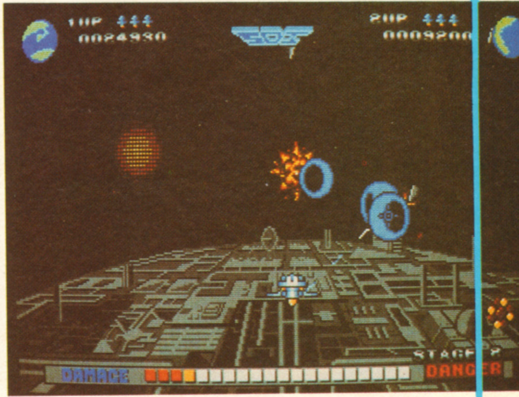
PERFECT BONUS 20000 POINTS

STAGE 3

DAMAGE DANGER

The end-of-level progress report. Initially the programmers neglected to include the cute waddling duck and were promptly told by Activision to go back and put it in. Quite right, too...

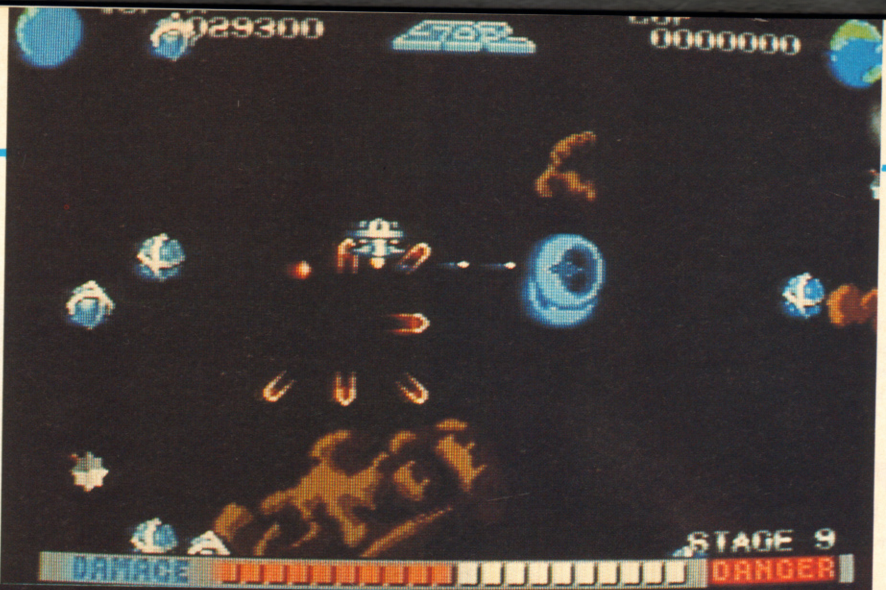
The second half of each level only appears if you let any missiles through on the first. Such is the enjoyment gleaned from this section, it's almost worth doing so just to play it!

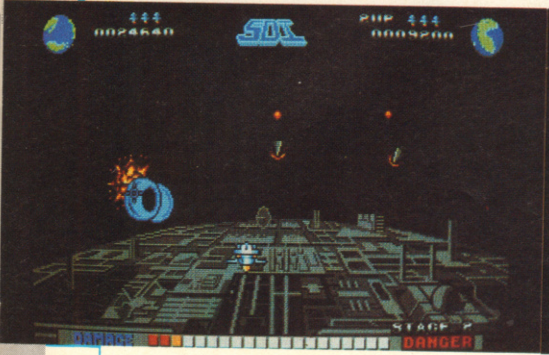


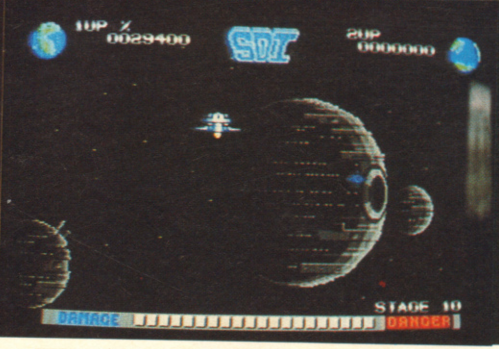
REVIEW

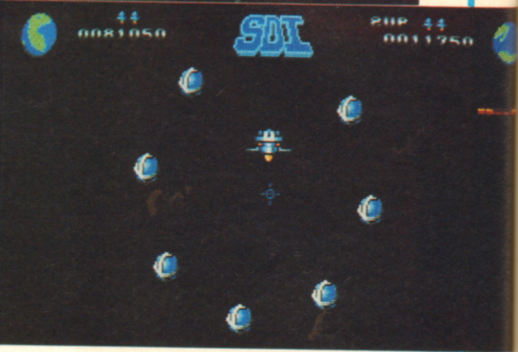
Yet more Missile Command **frolics to be had in the Defensive Stage. Watch for those two missiles closing in fast!**

Anyone remember the coin-op original? Alas anyone even *heard* of the original? Who cares... Activision have produced one this year's biggest surprises with this immensely accurage and playable conversion.







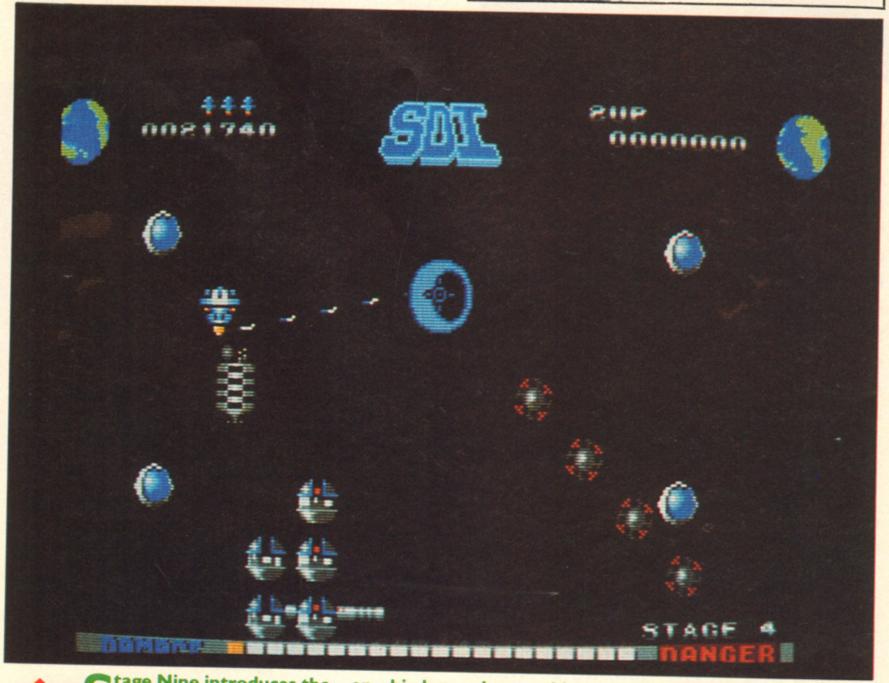


has ended, another performance graph is displayed, where the percentages of destroyed Soviet weaponry are turned into bonus points. There are 12 levels in all, each with its own set of pretty background graphics and indigenous enemies which get tougher as the game progresses.

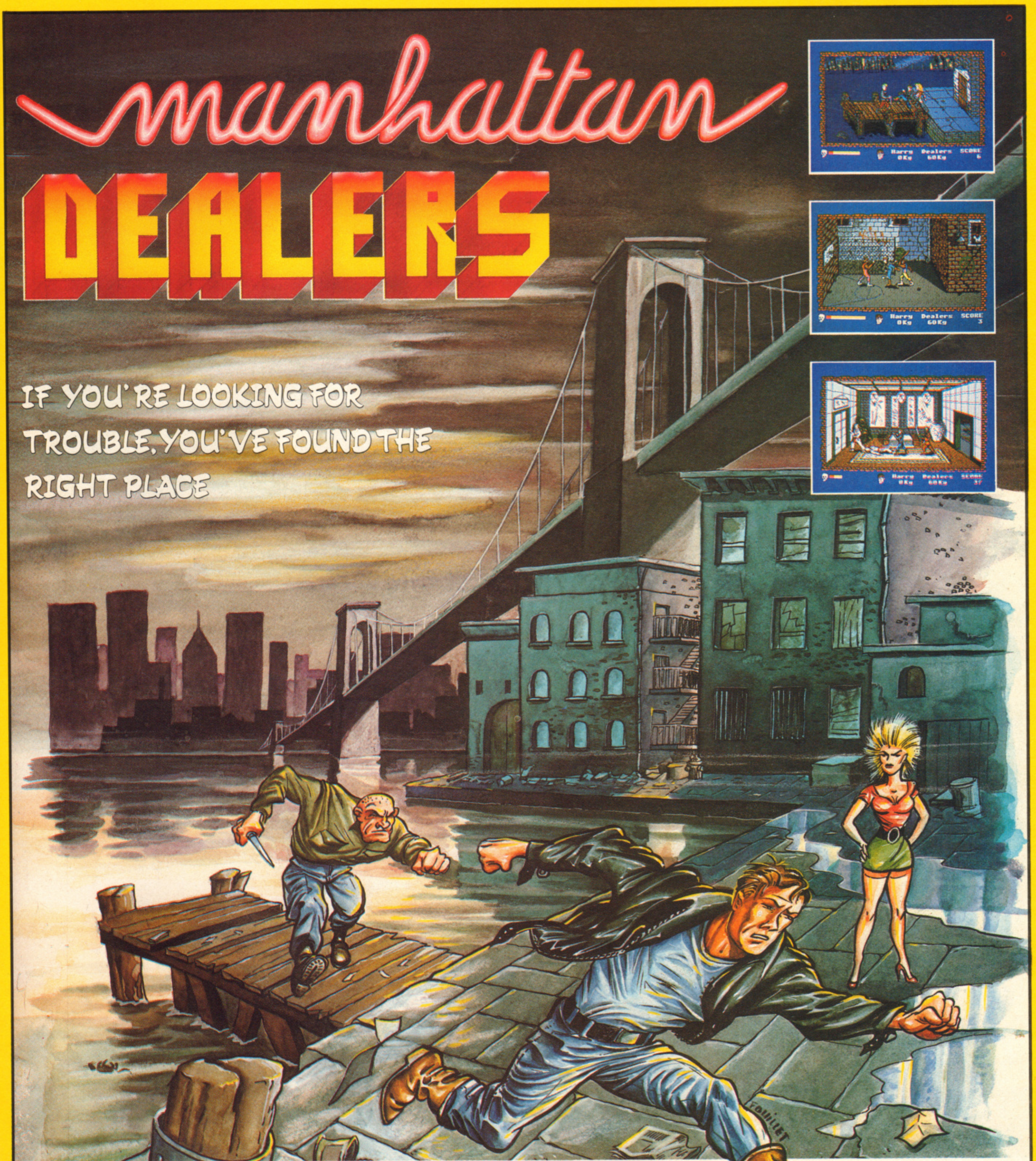
A Yes, SDI will be coming out on the Amiga, but information on it is a bit vague. We DO know that the graphics and sound will be tarted up a bit, and that you will have to wait a bit longer for it, but that's it for now. More detailed update should follow next month.

ST Activision has done a fine job of converting SDI to the ST. People may liken it to the age-old Missile Command, where missiles were knocked out of the sky with a cursor, but it just isn't fair to do so. SDI is a tremendously original approach to the cursor-based shoot 'em up, enhanced by the addition of some wonderful graphics and sound. The background graphics on each level have been very well defined, as have the fluidly-animated sprites. Scrolling is slick, and unlike many other ST games, it doesn't slow down or judder when the screen fills up with sprites (as it inevitably does on later levels). Sound too is some of the nicest on the ST so far, and features a different tune for each level, effective in-game noises and a brilliant sampled electric guitar loading tune. The two player options, where one player controls the cursor with the other handling the satellite is original and helps to generate a good team spirit. All in all SDI is quite definitely the most accurate coin-op conversion to date, and even pips Super Hang-On when it comes down to sheer playability value. An absolute must for all ST owners.

PRICE:	**£19.99**
RELEASE DATE:	**Mid November**
GRAPHICS	**82%**
SOUND	**80%**
PLAYABILITY	**89%**
VALUE	**82%**
OVERALL	**86%**



Stage Nine introduces the... er... big lumpy brown things. Graphically exquisite, and they don't damage the satellite either!


manhattan
DEALERS
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR TROUBLE, YOU'VE FOUND THE RIGHT PLACE
Harry Dealers SCORE
0Kg 60Kg 6
Harry Dealers SCORE
0Kg 60Kg 3
Harry Dealers SCORE
60Kg 37
FOUILLET

Manhattan Dealers is an action packed 3D combat game in which you will need all your skill to overcome your enemies. In different areas of Harlem vicious thugs spread fear and terror. On the banks of the Hudson River, evil vamps crack their whips. In the most devastated slums of the Bronx, pitiless skinheads and chainsaw maniac punks shed innocent blood. Cruel ninjas and invincible samurais control the streets of Chinatown.

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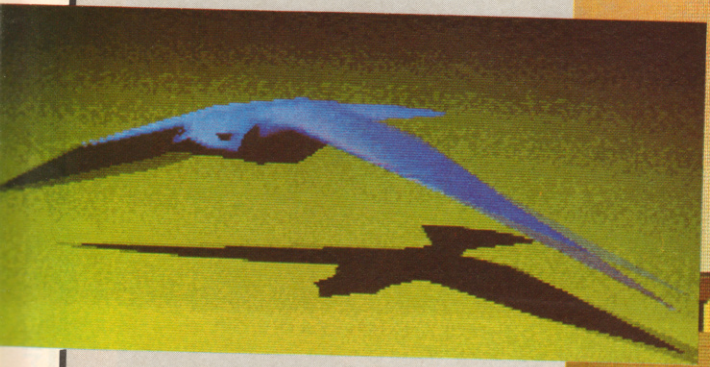
DEMOS

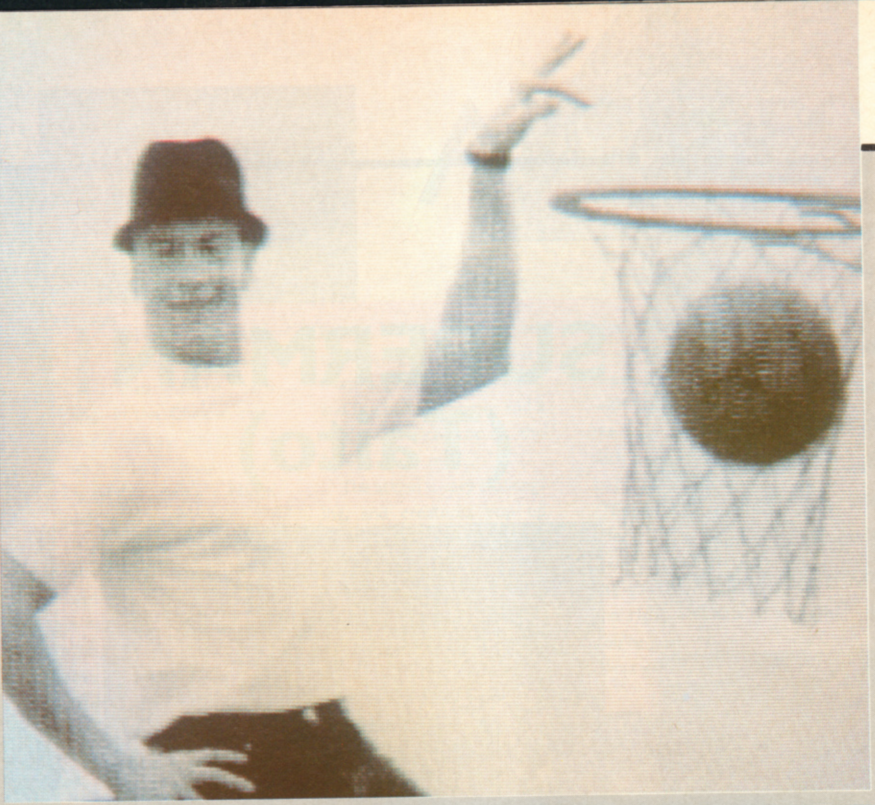
Welcome once again to our regular helping of demos. There's a fine selection on show this month, including what is quite possibly some of the funkiest music yet heard on the ST. Anyway, if you've got a demo that you think the world should know about, pop it in a jiffy bag and send it to THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London ECIR 3AU, with an accompanying letter explaining exactly what it is, who you are, and (if possible) how people can get their mitts on it. If it's any good we'll do our best to feature it.

ALL VALLEY KARATE

DISK 122

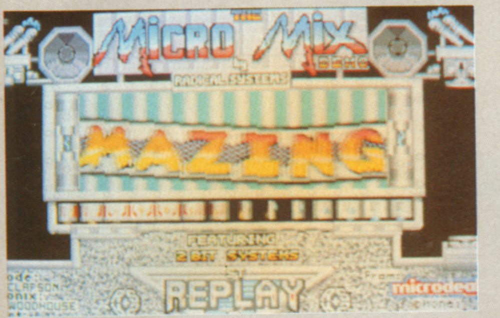
ST A bit weird, this one, but impressive nonetheless. It's an original animation system by the name of the Silicon Animation Machine (SAM) which animates (surprise surprise) a series of Neochrome digitised pictures. The demo accompanying it is a sequence of digitised picture from the closing scenes of **The Karate Kid**, where Daniel (Ralph Macchio) decks his opponent with a lethal flying kick. The sequence is only about two seconds long but repeats continually and represents an extremely pleasing effect. If you get bored you can always start messing about with the frames of animation and get some very silly results. My old sides, they ached for days...





DISK 152

ST Without doubt one of the most enjoyable demos we've received this month. Quite simply it's a completely digitised rendition of the MARRS Number One hit of a year ago, **Pump Up The Volume**. Accompanied by some simplistic but effective graphics and an entertaining swirly scrolling message, this version is arguably better than the original record! The samples are of an excellent quality, and at times this remix is completely indistinguishable from the 'real thing'. It also contains a whole host of new samples, including the recent "Buggerallmoney" chant and quotes from Forbidden Planet ("Human beings nearby"), Star Trek ("Captain to Bridge") and the best of the lot, Mission Impossible, with the classic "This tape will self-destruct in five seconds". ALL the lyrics from the original are there, and all in all it represents one of the best Public Domain disks on the ST to date. Don't miss it!



Micro Mix
Systems
Replay

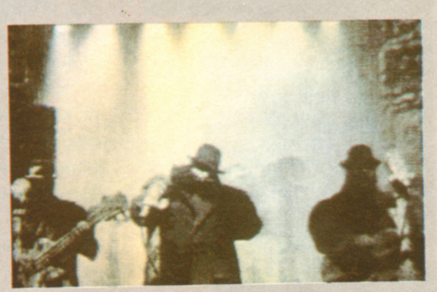
Micro Mix
mikrodeal
Replay

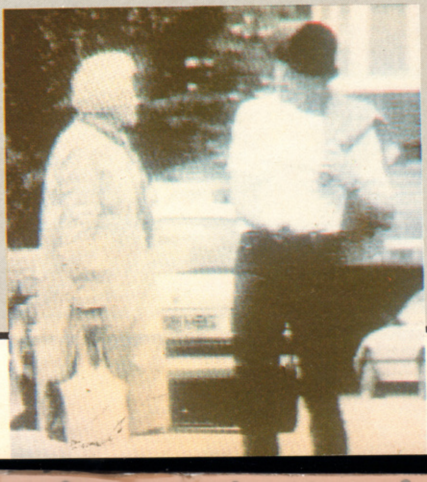
DISK 17

A Real Amiga demo afficionados will probably have already seen this one about before, as it's beginning to get on a bit now (it's been doing the rounds in shop windows in Tottenham Court Road for ages). Amiga disk 17 features a compilation of animation demos, including the gorgeous 'Birds'. No, not the Page Three variety that seem to be a hit with demo makers of late but the flappy ones. In this case some beautifully animated seagulls flap their way around a solid Amiga logo, in time to some sampled seagull-type sounds. Also featured on the disk is a ray-traced Amiga ball (snore) and a reasonably effective animation that's the result of merging **Scult 3D** and **Deluxe Paint**.

DISK 150

A Now here's a novelty. The popular TV ad for Miller Lite, accompanied by the Hollies' classic **He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother** (it's the real original version too, not the crappy Bill Medley one, remade for **Rambo III**). About a third of the record is there (the same as featured in the ad) with all the speech, and just for fun, stills from the ad have been digitised and are plyed as the music runs. Check out the bewildered granny for a good belly laugh.





Coin-op connoisseurs have lots to keep them occupied this month, what with Ninjas to be battled and helicopters to be captained – and you can even become Superman for a couple of bob. But best of all is a race and chase game which gives Outrun a run for its money. Julian Rignall fills the slots...

SUPERMAN

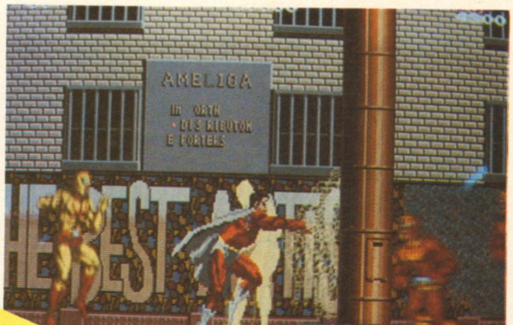
CHASE HQ

NINJA SPIRIT

NINJA KAZAN

COBRA COMMAND

SUPERMAN (Taito)



Is it a shoot 'em up? Is it a beat 'em up? No! It's both: it's **Superman.** Taito recently acquired the rights to the evergreen DC comic character and **Superman** is the end result – and what a disappointment it is.

One or two players are given the opportunity to put their Y-fronts on the outside of their tights and take to the skies to defend truth, justice and liberty – or whatever Superman defends these days. If two players join the action, one wears the traditional blue and red garb, while the other takes control of a similar sprite who's dressed in red and blue.

The first level is pretty much **Kung-Fu Master** in a different package. The super heroes walk or fly along a horizontally scrolling street kicking and punching yellow androids as they emerge from both sides of the screen. It takes a couple of kicks and punches to do away with an enemy, or a single power bolt can be fired by keeping the fire button depressed for a few seconds in **R-Type** fashion.

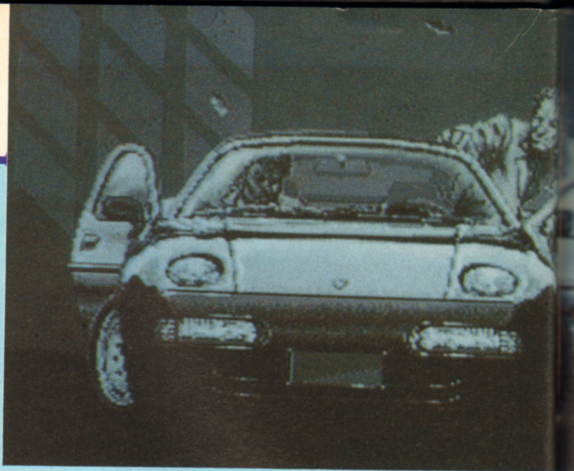
As the players progress, android attacks become more and more intensive, making it difficult to avoid their energy-sapping punches. Each accurate enemy hit knocks a third off Superman's energy bar, and he has three lives.

At the end of the first level is a big green giant – not a very jolly one, for he rains punches on the do-gooders. Kick and punch him enough times and he eventually gives up the ghost and the level is complete.

Next comes a vertically scrolling flight up a seemingly never ending skyscraper. Again Yellow androids attack, but this time they're accompanied by silver robots who are hardier foes. Reach the top and the action switches back to horizontally scrolling as the Supermen fly hig over the rooftops punching at rocks dropping from above, or blasting them with their eye lasers which take the place of the rather useless kick function. Endure the shower of boulders and a helicopter appears, which attempts to blast the heroes with machine gun fire. Here the eye lasers come in particularly handy, since the chopper explodes when zapped several times.

After that the action reverts to the first level, with tougher and morenumerous androids and robots. Just to break up the tedium a little, Spiderman makes a guest appearance and attempts to trap the Supermen in his sticky web. Otherwise, it's all basically the same.

Considering the immense potential of a Superman game, Taito have squandered their licence. With two weak beat 'em up sections and a very poor shoot 'em up, **Superman** is both dull and repetitive.



CHASE HQ (T

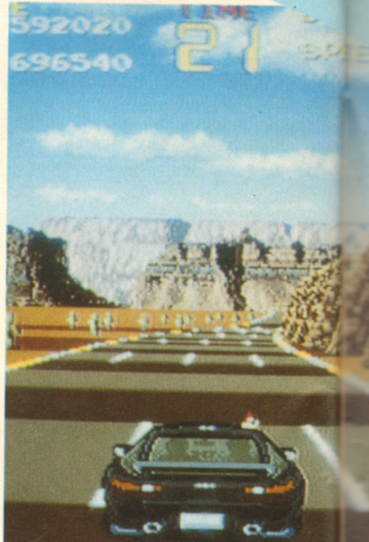
If you've ever fancied taking the wheel of a Porsche and driving with complete disregard for the highway code, now's your chance. **Chase HQ** is a brilliant new race game with a difference.

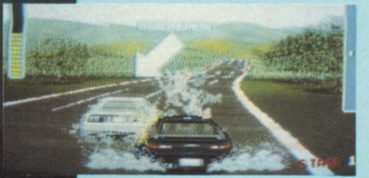
The player takes the role of a policeman whose job is to pursue wanted criminals before they leave the city limits – and in this particular scenario, all the felons seem to own very exotic and fast sports cars, hence the need to drive a Porsche.

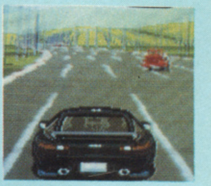
When sufficient ten pences are inserted, the description of the wanted criminal and his vehicle is displayed, and Nancy from headquarters gives an audio briefing – the speech is crystal clear and sets the scene for the impending chase.

The scene shifts to the familiar **Out Run** viewpoint of above and behind the player's black Porsche, and the action begins. The distance from the wanted car is shown and the objective is to drive down the highway as quickly as possible and sight the vehicle before the timer runs down.

When the target vehicle is sighted, extra time is added and the fun really starts. To stop the criminal from escap-







(Taito)

ing, his car has to be knocked off the road. The condition of his car is shown by a bar on the right which increases as hits are sustained. The felon is no mug, and weaves and dodges ramming attempts –

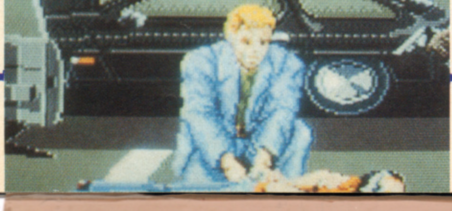
To help matters, the Porsche has three turbo boosts which are activated to send it screaming down the road, hopefully doing some serious damage to the target car. When all three boosts are used up, the player has to rely on the Porsche's maximum speed until the next round, when another three are fitted.

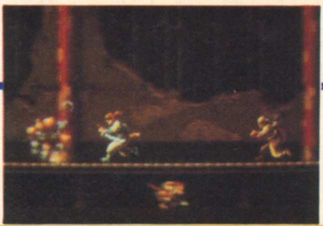
If the enemy car is damaged enough, smoke starts pouring from the rear, and only one more hit is needed to send it skidding off the road, whereupon the Porsche slews in front of it and a brief scene is shown of the criminal being read his rights.

Chase HQ is sheer brilliance, and is one of the best arcade games I've seen in years. The action is incredibly hectic as the car is driven through heavy traffic and the offender is bashed off the road. There's oodle of speech, with the co-driver keeping up a running commentary the whole time with comments like: "Hit him one more time", "Go on man", and "C'mon, let's get him". The atmosphere is enhanced further with a brilliant siren, whcih the co-driver slaps on the roof as soon as the wanted car is spotted.

The graphics are what you'd expect of a quality arcade game, with convincing roadside obstacles, a feeling fo real 3D on other cars and realistic hills and bumps – personally I think it looks better than **Out Run.**

So, if you're a racing fan, track down **Chase HQ** and prepare yourself for one of the most thrilling and adrenalin-pumping drives of your life.





NINJA SPIRIT
(Irem)

There are more Ninja games in the arcades than there are Wongs in the Chinese telephone directory, and most of them aren't much cop. However, Irem's **Ninja Spirit** is an exception.

It plays in similar style to **Ghosts 'n' Goblins,** a well-used but still popular format, but has sufficient new twists to lift it head and shoulders above most games.

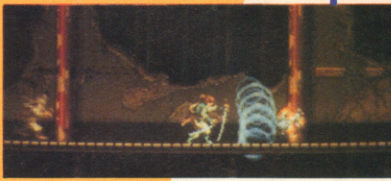
The plot is the usual old tripe about some bimbo who's been kidnapped by an evil person of disreputable nature and intent. Naturally this cad needs to be taught a lesson and the captive freed, so it's up to the player as a Ninja with a heart of gold to do the deed.

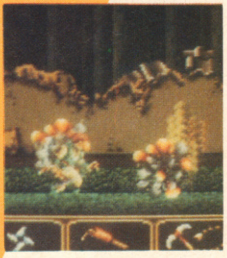
The rescue bid starts in a forest, and the player does battle with the arch-villain's army of minions. Initially armed with a slicin' scimitar, extra weapons are picked up along the way by killing the enemy and picking up the glowing icons that are left behind. These extras are quite imaginative, and vary from a glowing force shield and fire bolts to bombs and a shadow, which copies the Ninja's every move.

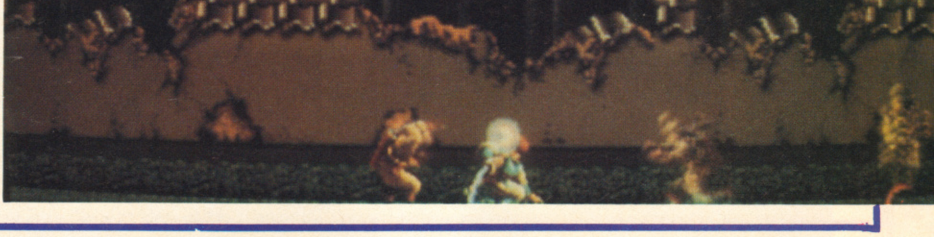
The action is very challenging, and creatures pop up from every conceivable position, making the first few games very short-lived affairs. Practice makes perfect, and once you're aware of the type of surprises the game offers, progress is made. Giant guardians attack at regular intervals and are formidable foes. Fortunately there's a continue play option for players with little regard for their budget.

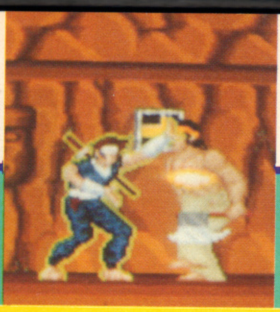
There are plenty of different weapons to pick up and try, and the map is very large, offering plenty of scope for players to develop their talents. The graphics are stunning, with excellent use of colour and some highly imaginative sprites – my particular favourites are the camouflaged aliens that appear in the bows of trees and hurl missiles. The background scrolls in parallax, which gives a depth not usually associated with games of this type, and the look is almost film-like, such is the strength and quality of the backdrops.

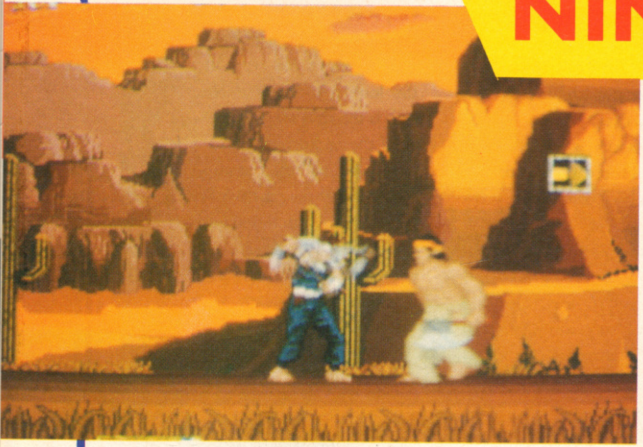
Sound is also used to good effect, and there's a haunting soundtrack which ties in with the gameplay to create just the right ambience. Even if you're sick to death with Ninja games, try this out.











NINJA KAZAN (Jaleco)

Although Jaleco have attempted to spice this up with a wacky scenario and an **R-Type** style beam-up punch, what they've produced is yet another in a long line of tired-looking Ninja adventures.

The player takes control of Kazan, who for some inexplicable reason has found himself in the Wild West, and guides him across horizontally (and occasionally vertically) scrolling landscape.

Within seconds of Kazan starting his mission, indians attack from all sides. Fortunately, he's capable of defending himself with kicks and punches. He's also blessed with the ability to fire energy bolts. However, this manoeuvre leaves the black-garbed one defenceless, allowing the attackers to draw dangerously close.

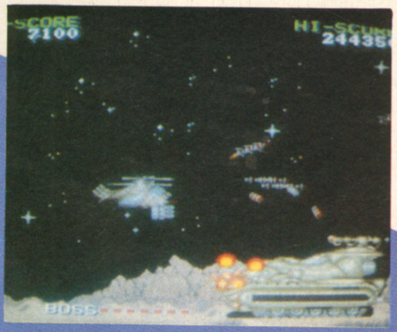
As Kazan explores the landscape, treasure chests are revealed which are broken open with a well-aimed kick. The booty therein is collected for extra points, and occasionally an extra weapon is discovered, which is picked up to grace the hero with shields or extra kick and punch power.

Further on the indians become meaner, firing arrows as the time traveller approaches, forcing him to jump or duck as they sail past. Contact proves fatal and one of his three lives is forfeit.

At the end of the level is the obligatory guardian who requires repeated hits to kill. Then it's off to the next time zone to battle spear-throwing Romans in a situation that's exactly the same as the previous level bar different sprites and backdrops.

Some arcade game manufacturers seem to have come to a creative standstill recently, and **Ninja Kazan** illustrates this perfectly. It does have an original storyline, but it plays very much like the ageing **Kung-Fu Master**. The occasionally vertically scrolling sections where Kazan climbs hills and mountains add little excitement, and after a couple of games boredom sets in.

The graphics, although competent, lack flair and detail, and the soundtrack is merely wallpaper, adding nothing to the atmosphere. Looking at the arcade scene in general, it's obvious that there's the technology to produce some amazing games – let's hope that companies like Jaleco come up with some ideas to match that potential, so we don't have to put up with predictable dross like this any more.



COBRA COMMAND (Data East)

Atlantic Ocean
Indian Ocean

After the thrills and spills of **Chase HQ**, **Cobra Command** brought me down to Earth with a very uncomfortable jolt. It's yet another horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up in similar mould to **Nemesis, Vulcan Venture** *et al*, but unfortunately is so simplistic and plain it looks like a son of **Scramble** rather than the product of 1988 arcade technology.

Prior to the action, a briefing is given describing the forthcoming mission – pretty dreary stuff really, and basically an excuse for the player to fly a solo mission into enemy territory, blasting anything that moves and engaging the ubiquitous guardians *en route*.

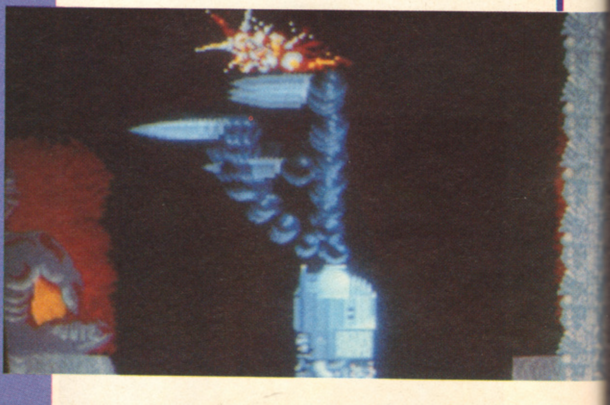
Like most blasters these days, the action is progressive, extra weapons being added to the chopper when it picks up an icon left after an entire fleet of enemy craft are destroyed. Unfortunately there are only seven extras – two levels of air-to-ground missiles, speed-ups and four levels of improved firepower – and these can all be collected very quickly, leaving few surprises for later levels.

Enemy forces are both on the ground and in the air, and neither offer much resistance to a full-armoured helicopter.

The first guardian is a giant tank and is despatched with ease – just let rip with a few missiles and it explodes, not with a bang, but a whimper.

The action continues with a more restricted playing area and slightly more aggressive enemy forces. Nevertheless, the action still isn't challenging.

The problem with **Cobra Command** is that it's too predictable – play it a couple of times and you can easily notch up some impressive scores. The graphics and sound are amateurish and unimaginative, and the whole game is dull to an extreme.



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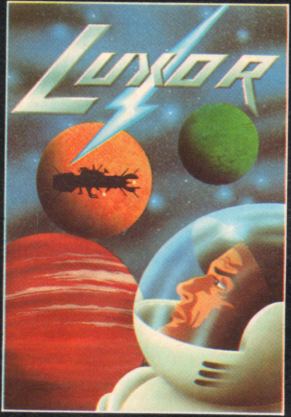

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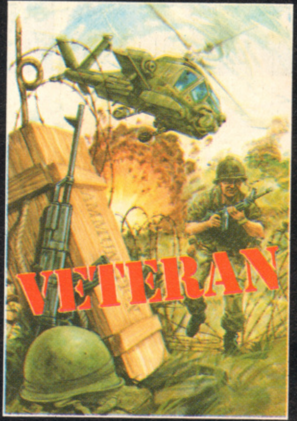
VETERAN
SCORE

VETERAN



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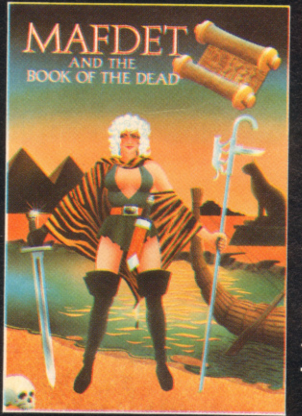

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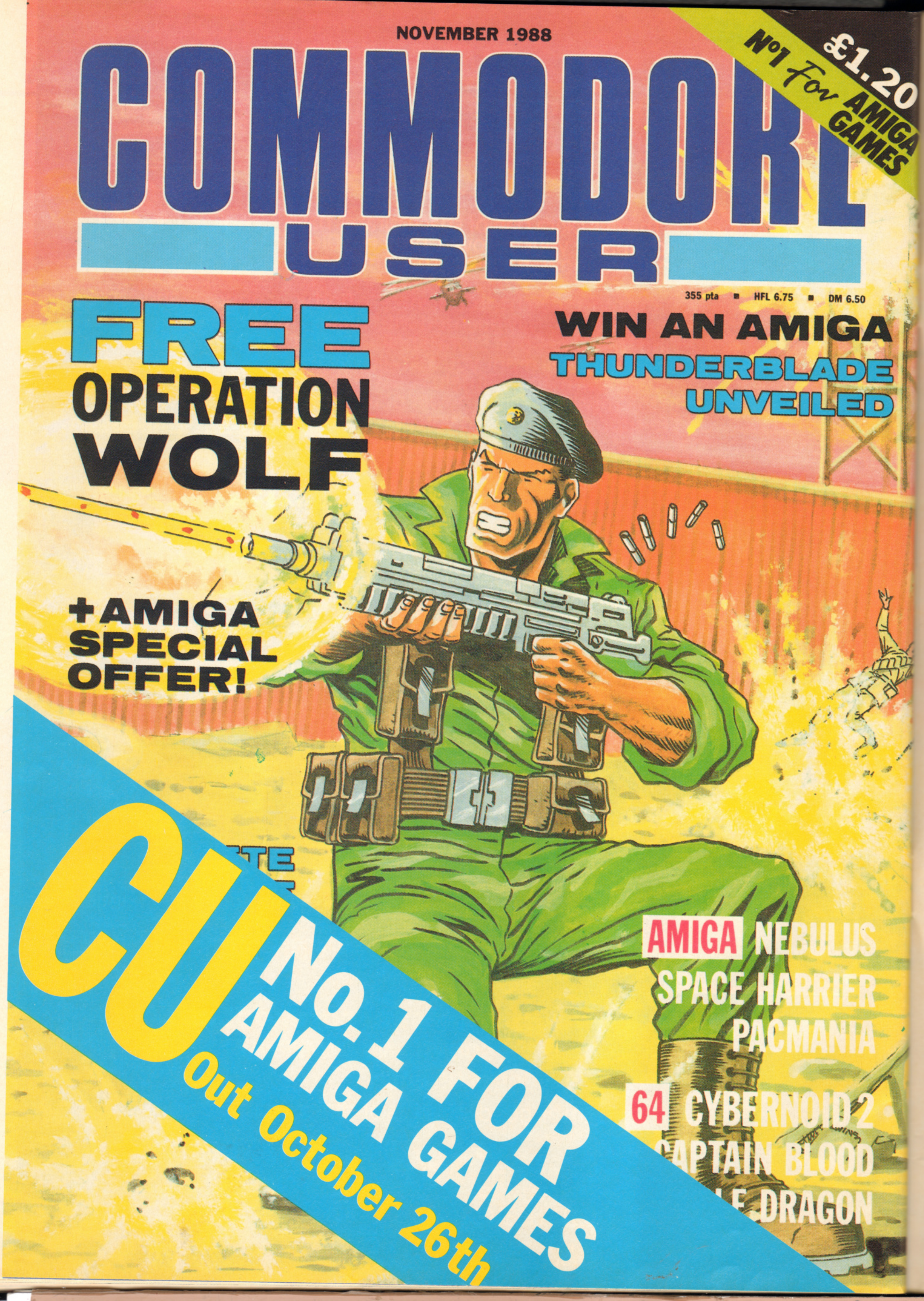

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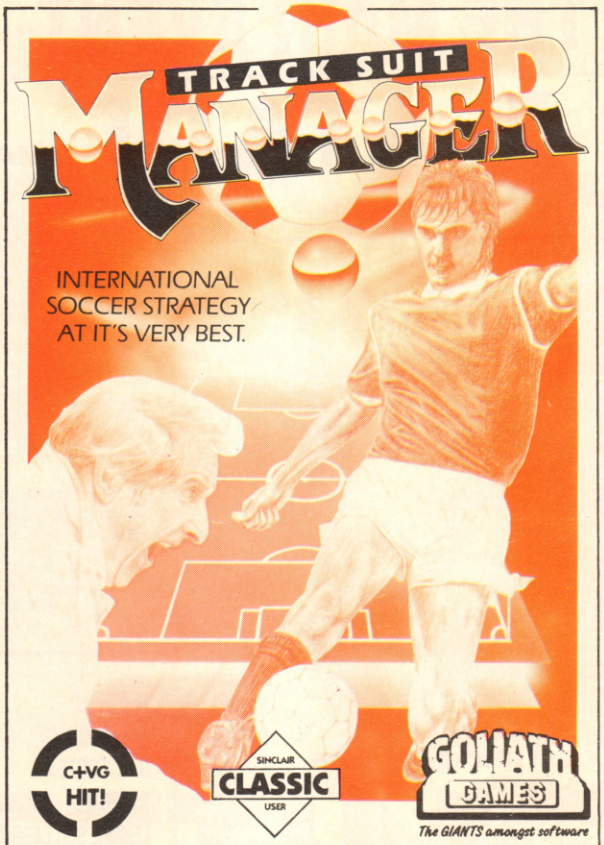
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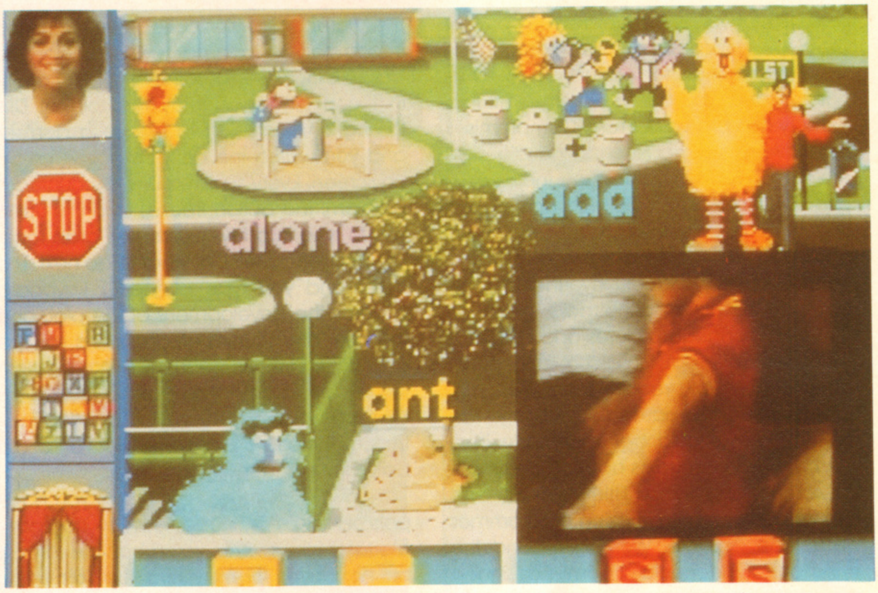


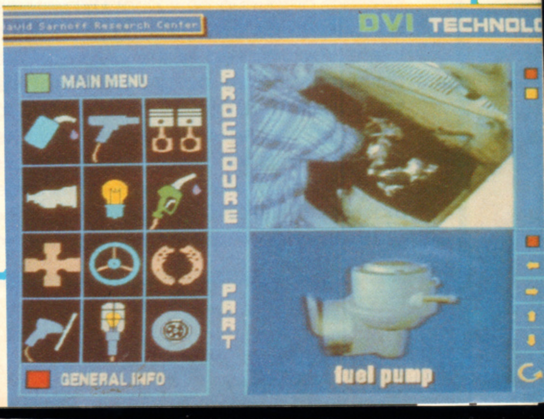
GETTING INTERACTIVE

The possibilities for interactive entertainment opened up by CD-based technologies such as Digital Video Interactive and Compact Disc Interactive are almost limitless. Within ten years, games will be more like mini-movies, produced, filmed and directed by a creative team and implemented on a computer-based system that uses CDs to store the game data along with digitised sound and images.

Entertainment is only one application – educational, training and sales material can all be presented using interactive CD-ROM techniques. 'What can you do with it?' is the kind of question about their systems that CDI and DVI developers find difficult to answer – imagination will only be limited by commercial realities when it comes to putting together CDI or DVI programmes.

Which system is likely to take over in 1995? Uncertainty abounds – the electronics giants Sony and Philips have joined forces to avoid the VHS/Betamax fiasco that surrounded the debut of home videotape recorders, and have come up with a detailed standard for Compact Disc Interactive. Very little is available in the way of demonstration software at the moment, however, and once-enthusiastic CDI developers are turning their gaze towards Digital Video Interactive, the baby of General Electric. Other, yet to be announced CD technologies are no doubt in preparation, and only time will tell which interactive system will win out. Everyone is certain that one system will achieve dominance in the next ten years, however...

So why has initial CDI enthusiasm been tempered? It's not 'vapourware' – CDI is definitely just around the corner – but there are some technical limitations which will corral the creativity of CDI programme designers once the hardware is out there in the home. CDI simply can't produce full-screen, full-motion video of acceptable quality, because without compresssion, the digital data needed to create moving video on screen occupies vast amounts of space on CD-ROM. CDI encounters prob-



lems with the data transfer rate – not only have you got to store a vast amount of digital information for each frame of full-motion video, you also have to shift it into memory at a prodigious rate. Compromises also have to be made on the audio side, with CDI. Full Hi-Fi sound of the quality recorded onto audio CD disc occupies a lot of space, so sampling techniques need to be used that reduce the fidelity of the sound and save space. Nevertheless, perfectly acceptable soundtracks may be recorded alongside pictures and images.

CDI will be great for assembling programmes that don't require full-motion, full-screen video – reasonable quality full-motion video should be achievable in a window which occupies about a quarter of the screen, and with a little ingenuity and the use of stills, some amazing programmes will still be possible. Working around the limitations of the medium, games designers should be able to produce some pretty damn impressive products – probably in the mould of interactive fiction *a la* Infocom, or much-enhanced adventures with sound and graphics in the mould of Magnetic Scrolls. Imagine what they could do, using the new technology to write an adventure, drawing on existing or specially-shot video footage...

But there will be more to compact disc adventuring than pretty pictures and high-quality sound. For instance, CDI might allow the concept of Non Player Characters in adventure games to reach new heights of sophistication – providing there is enough RAM in the computer working with the CD player in the CDI system. Skills of the movie director and musician will be combined with the talents of the adventure game designer and writer to produce interactive movies – imagine **Mind Forever Voyaging** with footage from Steven Speilberg – or truly demanding puzzle and problem-solving adventures which use animation to help you enter the gameworld – **Jinxter**, perhaps, with animation sequences by Terry Gilliam.

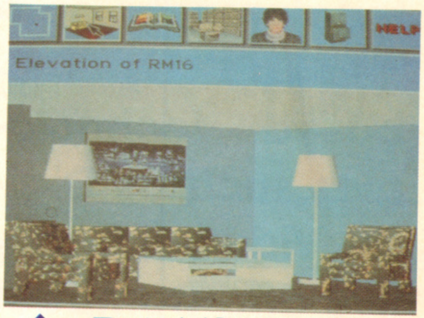
Adventure games of the future, whether they are produced on CDI or DVI systems, are likely to be mind-blowing even when they are compared to the cream of the current 16-bit crop. To get a taste of the future, Atari ST owners with £500-£1,000 to spare can connect an interactive laser disc to their computer and play Microdeal's home version of the **Dragon's Lair** arcade machine.

There's no joystick waggling involved in the Microdeal version of **Dragon's Lair**, and in comparison to the arcade machine the action is incremental rather than flowing. As in the original, you play the role of Dirk Daring on a mission to rescue a damsel, and you watch the cartoon action unfold on screen. Every so often Dirk encounters a problem, the action freezes and it is up to you to type in a few words, like 'grab rope' or 'jump left' to tell Dirk what to do next. The command you type at the ST keyboard governs the development of the plot, and the laser disc scurries off and plays you the appropriate video sequence. More of an interactive cartoon with regular pauses than an adventure, but an interesting illustration of the kind of games that you could be playing in a few years' time.

It's available today, but unless you have pots of money or already own an appropriate laser disc player, you'd be wise to look but not buy – **Journey Into The Lair** is fun, but gameplay is still simplistic and the appeal is unlikely to last for the more matutre gamester. Microdeal has no firm plans to produce further games for their ST/Laser Disc interface system, so a heavy investment in kit isn't really justified by the novelty value.

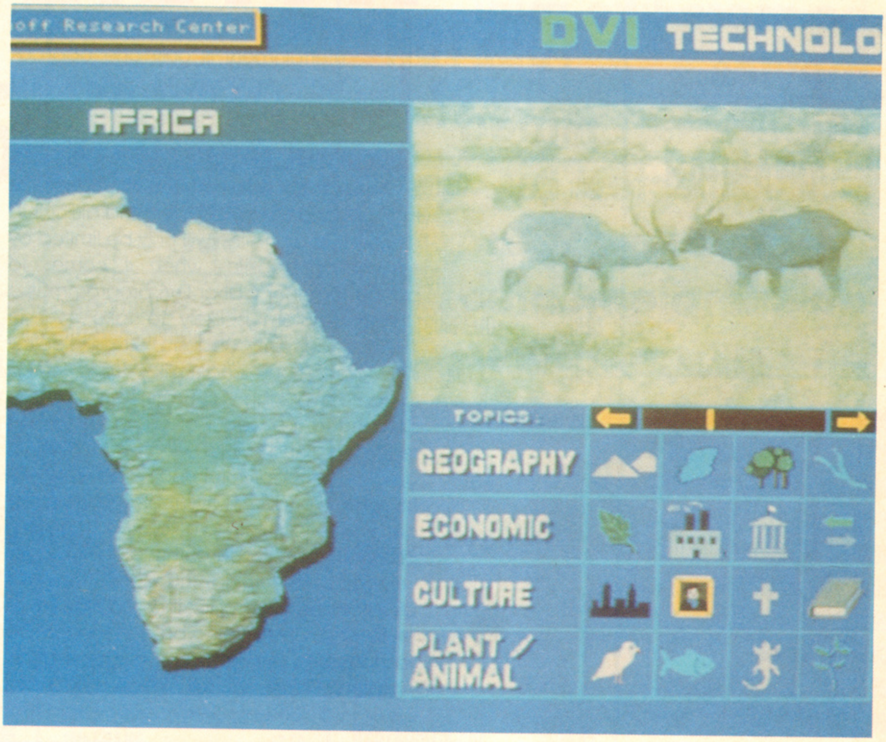
Electronic Arts, as you might expect of a giant American company, is actively researching the possibilities of CDI – although it believes that it is the technology of the mid 1990's, work is proceeding apace. Greg Riker is in charge of EA's CDI development team which is working on a bespoke hardware and software system to exploit CDI technology. Using this prototype system, known as the Demodulator, the EA research group has already put together an in-house demo of its capabilities in the form of an interactive 'adventure' game.

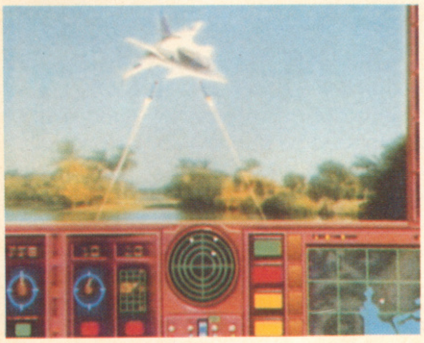
Using locations and people readily to



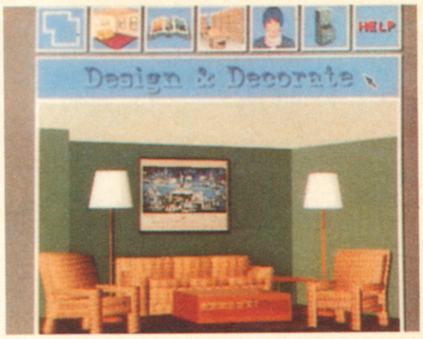
Design And Decorate: shopping the DVI way will allow customers to view the full range of products on offer from a retailer – interactively. This pilot application lets the users to arrange furniture in a room and experiment with the coverings.

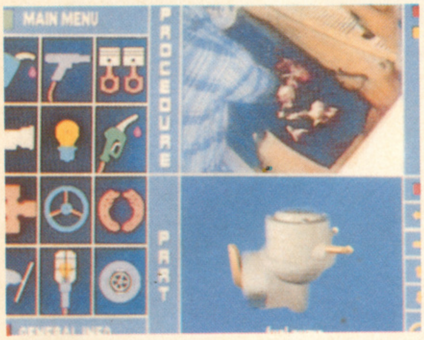
Geography and Sesame Street, two interactive educational applications for the DVI system.

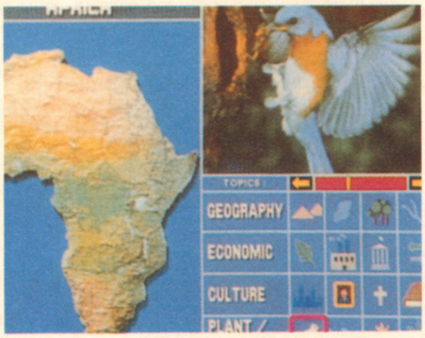


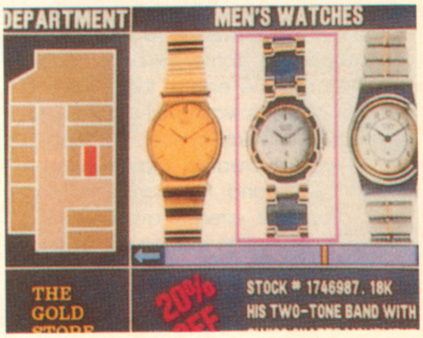


> **"**The games... 'er, excuse us, interactive entertainment, that will be produced on CDI should make all of today's bestsellers look like **Pong**."
> **Bob Jacob and David Riordan, Cinemaware**









hand – the development group personnel and the offices they inhabit – special video footage was shot and digitised for incorporation in the demo. It's a simple game, starring the staff, and the scenario sets the player the task of rescuing the kidnapped programmers. Moving a cursor around the screen you click on objects in order to examine them further, pass through doors and achieve vital game objectives like answering the telephone. A neat adventure/mystery/puzzle game, that illustrates EA's perspective on CDI...

In Issue One, Bob Jacob of Cinemaware expressed his reservations about CDI – his company has already produced an interactive videotape game for an American toy company, and keeps a close eye on interactive technologies. Cinemaware has set up an entire department to evaluate and work on new media – the Interactive Entertainment Group, headed by David Riordan, who co-designed **Ballblazer** for Lucasfilm Games and designed **Freedom Fighter**, the coin-op laser disc game.

Although he was initially very enthusiastic about the future of CDI, some of Bob Jacob's enthusiasm has now worn off on account of the limitations the medium is likely to impose on a games designer. DVI, with its ability to decompress compressed sound and video information in real time is more sophisticated, allowing over an hour of good-quality, full-motion video, accompanied by sound to be stored on a single CD. It is currently considerably more expensive to produce a DVI player – first you have to buy the PC, and then the boards containing the DVI custom chips, the heart of the DVI system, add thousands to your bill.

The technology behind DVI is still being refined, but General Electric has worked with leading software producers and created several DVI pilots that show off the potential of the system for a variety of applications. **Design And Decorate**, a point of sale system aimed at the furnishings and fabric retailer is an interactive catalogue that allows the customer to input the shape of a room and then play interior designer.

Selecting from a catalogue of items, the customer can place furniture in the on-screen representation of the room at home, move objects around and even select different fabrics and wallcoverings for the 'furnished' room. Shopping for furniture the DVI way means that you can see how things are going to look before lugging them home and moving them into place. Unfortunate colour clashes become a thing of the past...

Clearly, browsing through an interactive catalogue is an interesting way of shopping and the technique could be applied to the benefit a host of High Street shops, from travel agencies to department stores. Once the interactive players are in a lot of homes, mail-order giants such as Kays and Littlewoods will be able to dispense with their three-inch-thick printed catalogues and send CDs through the post.

In a flying or driving simulation, where the 'player' needs to have unrestricted freedom to travel over a landscape or through an environment, you simply can't capture real video for all the possible views from the cockpit. Some environments, such as the inside of the human body or fantasy scenarios such as the one in **Dungeon Master**, are impossible to film. With DVI, photographically-captured textures may be mapped onto computer generated scenery, producing a remarkably realistic simulated environment.

Activision worked with General Electric to produce a flight simulation pilot for DVI. Using a real photograph of a WWII Spitfire cockpit for the player's view, and incorporating sounds recorded in a Spitfire, in Activision's demo, the DVI pilot flies over a simulated English landscape – and the level of realism approaches that of some of the megabuck, professional flight simulators. Using a combination of actuality and fantasy, DVI games could take the player into wholly-believable environments which have the visual impact of a feature film.

Activision/Mediagenic is taking a temporary back seat on the development of DVI product for the time being, however.

Bruce Davies, President and Chief Executive Officer of Mediagenic is clearly proud of the flight simulator demo his company produced for DVI, and sees the future importance of a CD-based interactive entertainment medium: "CD ROM is here today, while DVI is mid-1990's technology – when it happens, we'll be there." He is less confident about the future of CDI: "we're still developing product for CDI, and won't abandon it, but the odds are against CDI – CD-X will be important, but no-one's quite sure what that X will be." Away from future technology, Activision/Mediagenic is about to release an entertainment product that uses the Macintosh Hypercard system. Called **Manhole**, the game will be available on CD ROM by the end of the year, and could well make its way to other formats...

CD ROM, Activision argues, presents a powerful enough creative challenge to be going on with, and the hardware and system software is already available and out there, bolted on to existing computers.

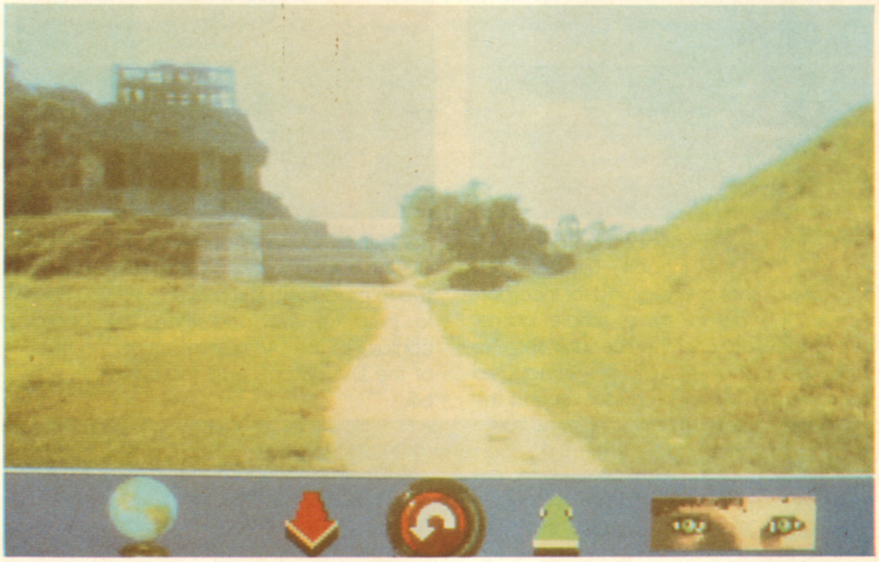
Training and education are probably the applications which will launch DVI and CDI – the capability of the system to combine high-definition graphics with full-motion video and a commentary, all in an interactive 'progress at your own pace' tutorial programme is ideally suited to teaching people. Companies and institutions who need to teach people, can afford to buy the CD equipment while it is still too expensive for the home user.

In the DVI automobile repair pilot, for instance, the student can see and hear an explanation of the removal of a fuel pump and then examine and manipulate a model of the fuel pump in another section of the screen. The student can also move to another part of the application to select a catalogue of parts or to access information on the models of fuel pumps available and their cost.

Educational programme pilots aimed at school-age children have also been produced on the DVI system. **Palenque** is a stunning exploration of an ancient Mayan site, and is perhaps the most impressive demonstration currently available. Using sequential still photographs, the view as you walk through the ancient site is presented on screen, with a new picture appearing on the screen each time you take a step forward – the effect is just like walking through the jungle. The user can zoom in on an area of the view, taking a closer look at a building or artefact, and then call up further information from the multi-media database included in the programme as a 'museum' which can be 'visited' at any time. A snapshot facility allows the user to take 'photographs' during the visit, and store them in an album as a souvenir.

A human guide escorts you during the visit, and can be called onto screen to give a commentary on what you have just seen. To round the whole educational adventure off, there is a section where the user is invited to play a few simplistic games which help to convey aspects of Mayan culture, such as the workings of a heiroglyphic written language.

Using **Palenque** is more like playing a game than following a course of study, and makes the David Attenborough style of TV documentary into an interactive game as well as an interactive learning process.



Palenque, an educational exploration of an ancient Mayan site. This DVI pilot was produced by Bank Street College of Education.

Using a parallel approach to the one taken in **Palenque**, exploring a fantasy scenario such as the one in **Dungeon Master** would become a real experience and the player would have to suspend very little disbelief...

CDI, in the Philips/Sony incarnation is an expansion on the audio CD player, a superset of the technology intended as a stand-alone item of domestic equipment, like a video or Hi-Fi stack, CDI is not meant to be a computer peripheral, like its cousin CD ROM.

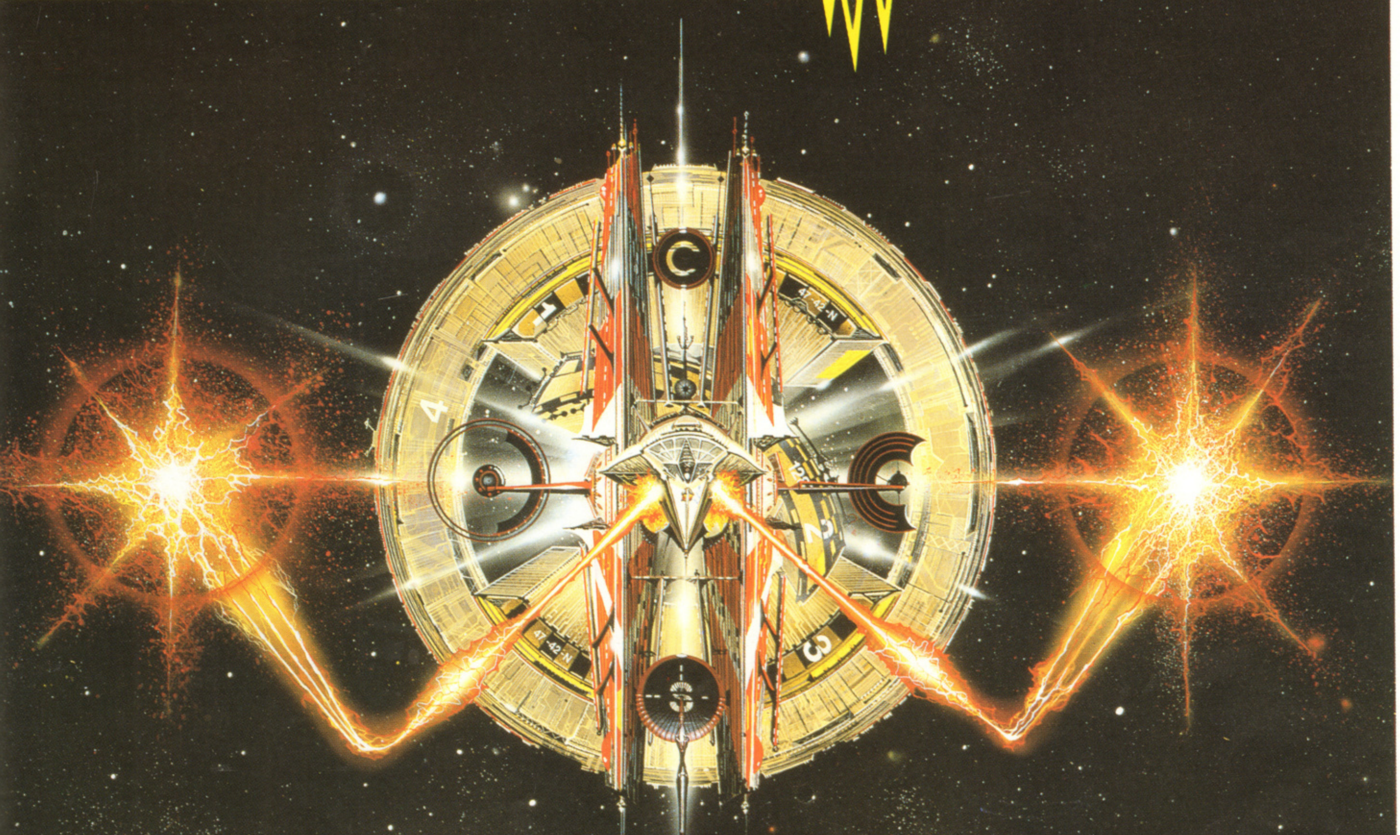
Accordingly, CDI programme makers are likely to be appealing to the mass market, the people who watch TV sitcoms and Eastenders rather than the dedicated minority of computer game players. DVI, on the other hand, is being developed as a set of boards that slot into a standard IBM AT or compatible, which already has a CD ROM drive – in a sense, the computer then becomes a peripheral to the DVI chipset. At the moment, a DVI system looks likely to be considerably more expensive than a CDI system for some time. DVI will have to make sales in the corporate and commercial sector before volume production allows the price to fall, and DVI to become an affordable commodity for the home user.

The first close contact most computer game players will have with the new interactive technology is likely to be in the arcades or the High Street – unless you are a high-flying corporate executive signed up for advanced training courses or a member of one of the armed forces on a programme of simulator training. In the early days, both the hardware and software are going to be prohibitively expensive for the individual user, and early applications will be produced for people who can use them to make money – to increase profitability by selling more goods, training staff or encouraging the likes of you and me to put more coins in a slot.

Like CD ROM, interactive systems based on CD technology will take a while to make its way into the home. It's 1988 and Boeing are about to take delivery of their 757 maintenance manuals from Pergamon Compact Solution – it's going to be a good while yet before you can afford to take delivery of Encyclopedia Britannica on CD, and even longer before you're playing CDI games on the telly in the front room, even with Atari's promised CD drive...

The wait is going to be worthwhile.

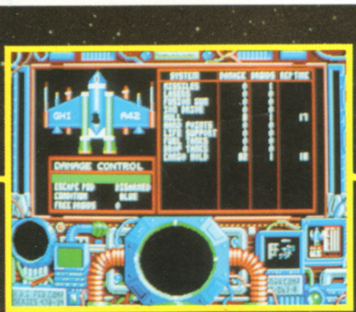
Your quest is interstellar wealth and to hell with glory



The universe stretches before you. 8 million worlds await your exploitation. Unimaginable wealth is your destiny if you can master the art of interstellar navigation, harness the intricacies of the photon drive and repel the deadly space pirates. Forget the medals, forget the honours, forget the glory. As a member of the Federation of Free Traders you live for money and will probably die for it.

FOFT

FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS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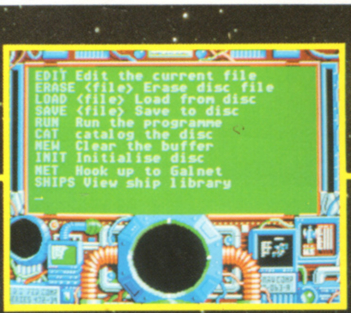

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EDIT Edit the current file
ERASE <file> Erase disc file
LOAD <file> Load from disc
SAVE <file> Save to disc
RUN  Run the programme
CAT  catalog the disc
NEW  Clear the buffer
INIT Initialise disc
NET  Hook up to Galnet
SHIPS View ship library
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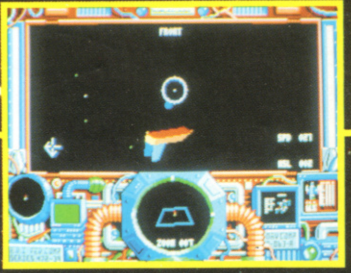

Screen shots from Atari ST version.

ATARI ST/AMIGA

£29.99

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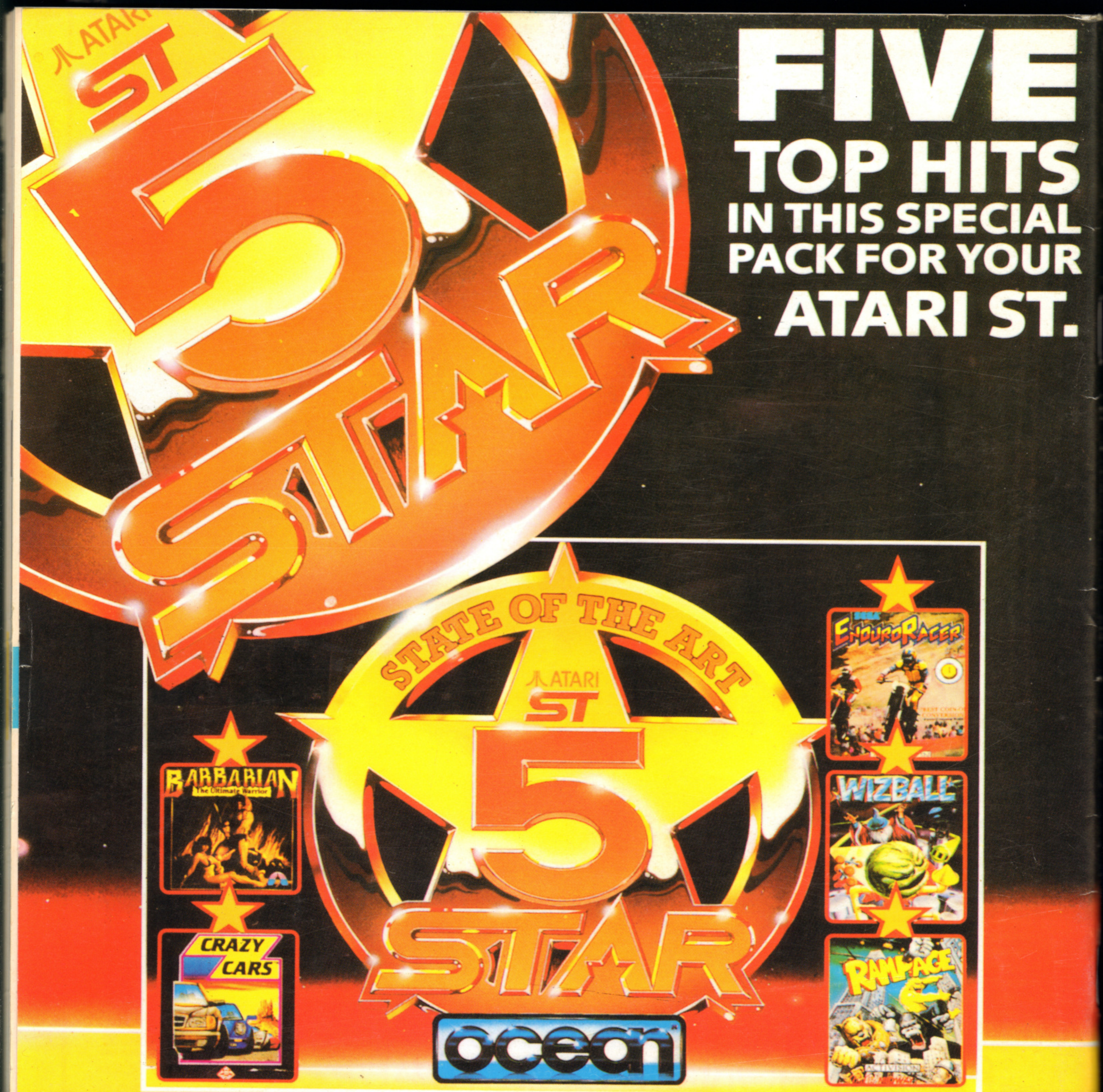
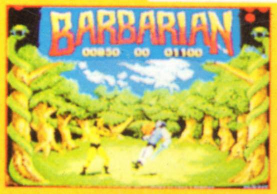
FIVE
TOP HITS
IN THIS SPECIAL PACK FOR YOUR ATARI ST.





THE STORY SO FAR... The evil sorcerer Drax has sworn to wreak doom on the people of the Jewelled City unless Princess Mariana is delivered to him. If a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess will be released. From the wastelands comes an unknown barbarian wielding his broadsword with deadly skill. Can he free the Princess? ONLY YOU CAN SAY...

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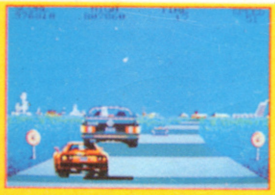

You are racing in the world's craziest race: The American Cross Country Prestige Cars Race. This race is over three tracks throughout the United States. Complete the race before the time runs out to get a faster car. You start with a PORCHE 911 Turbo and only the best drivers may drive a FERRARI GTO!

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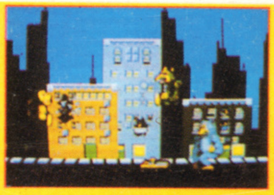

Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York, and jump on San Francisco. Three indescribably nasty characters which bear a remarkable likeness to King Kong, Godzilla and Wolf-Man, on 150 days of destruction, through 50 different cities.

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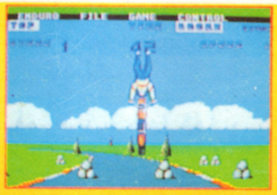

Based on the popular arcade coin op, ENDURO RACER described as "THE BEST COIN OP CONVERSION AVAILABLE" (Popular Computing Weekly). From tarmac tracks to desert trails, a stunning motorbike race pitting you against time as you compete with deadly opponents and the cruel and challenging terrain...

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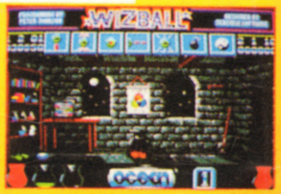

The evil Zark has rendered all landscapes drab and grey. With the help of your faithful servant Catelite restore Wizworld to its former glory. Collect icons for special effects as you manoeuvre to shake off the alien forces. Stunning graphics create the mood for a thrilling and compulsive game with hordes of hidden features and extra controls.

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